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ABSTRACT

This packet contains seven research briefs in the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory's (NWREL's) "School Improvement Research Series" for 1995-96. Topical Synthesis #8, "Community-Based Learning: A Foundation for Meaningful Educational Reform" (Thomas R. Owens and Changhua Wang) summarizes lessons that NREL has learned over the past 20 years about various community-based learning programs. Close-Up #19, "Educating for Citizenship" (Kathleen Cotton), describes issues concerning the content and processes of civic education. Close-Up #20, "School Size, School Climate, and Student Performance" (Kathleen Cotton), reviews research literature that examined the relationships among school size, school climate, and student performance. Snapshot #37, "Providing Integrated Services in an Inner-City School" (Joan Shaughnessy), relates how a small inner-city public elementary school--the Family Academy, New York, New York--designed an approach that successfully integrated social services with academic learning. Snapshot #38, "Integrating Middle School Curriculum around Real-World Issues" (James W. Kushman) describes how Waldo Middle School in Salem, Oregon, integrated middle-school curriculum around real-world issues. Snapshot #39, "Improving Elementary School Climate" (Kathleen Cotton), describes how Bonneville Elementary School in Pocatello, Idaho improved its school climate. Snapshot #40, "Leading an Inner-City School to 'Overall Excellence'" (Kathleen Cotton), describes how an inner-city school--the Thurgood Marshall Elementary School in Seattle, Washington--received national recognition for overall excellence through the leadership of the principal and key staff members. References accompany most of the briefs. (LMI)

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SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT RESEARCH SERIES

SERIES X
1995-96

1. TOPICAL SYNTHESIS #8	*Community-Based Learning: A Foundation for Meaningful Educational Reform*
2. CLOSE-UP #19	*Educating for Citizenship*
3. CLOSE-UP #20	*School Size, School Climate, and Student Performance*
4. SNAPSHOT #37	*Providing Integrated Services in an Inner-City School*
5. SNAPSHOT #38	*Integrating Middle School Curriculum Around Real-World Issues*
6. SNAPSHOT #39	*Improving Elementary School Climate*
7. SNAPSHOT #40	*Leading an Elementary School to "Overall Excellence"*

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Table of Contents: Series VI-X

PRODUCTS	Year/Series				
	1991-92/Series VI	1992-93/Series VII	1993-94/Series VIII	1994-95/Series IX	1995-96/Series X
Topical Syntheses	#5: School-Community Collaboration to Improve the Quality of Life for Urban Youth and Their Families	#6: School-Based Management	#7: Fostering Intercultural Harmony in Schools: Research Findings	Updated Research Synthesis on Effective Schooling Practices	#8: Community-Based Learning: A Foundation for Meaningful Educational Reform
Close-Ups	#11: Teaching Thinking Skills	#13: Developing Empathy in Children and Youth	#15: Developing Employability Skills	#17: Reducing the Dropout Rate	#19: Educating for Citizenship
	#12: Staff Development	#14: Nongraded Primary Education	#16: Integrated Curriculum	#18: Peer and Cross-Age Tutoring	#20: School Size, School Climate, and Student Performance
Snapshots	#21: Learning to Write and Assess Writing Quality - James Lick Middle School, San Francisco, CA	#25: Building Positive Student Self-Concept - Stevenson-Carson School District, Stevenson, WA	#29: Implementing a Nongraded Elementary Program - Konnoak Elementary School, Winston-Salem, NC	#33: Engendering School Improvement Through Strong Instructional Leadership - Sale Elementary and the Demonstration School, Columbus, MS	#37: Providing Integrated Services in an Inner-City School - The Family Academy, New York, NY
	#22: Using School Time Productively - J.S. Chick Traditional School, Kansas City, MO	#26: Achieving Success in Mathematics Through Innovative Programming - Davis Elementary School, Portland, OR	#30: School Improvement Through Teacher Decision Making - Laurel Elementary School, Junction City, OR	#34: Promoting Student Mathematics Learning Through a Hands-On and Visual Math Program - Portsmouth Middle School, Portland, OR	#38: Integrating Middle School Curriculum Around Real-World Issues - Waldo Middle School, Salem, OR
	#23: Improving Student Performance Through Mastery Learning - College Place Middle School, Lynnwood, WA	#27: Success for At-Risk Students Through Computer-Assisted Instruction - Pensacola High School, Pensacola, FL	#31: Restructuring at the Secondary Level: Grouping, Instruction, and Assessment - York High School, Yorktown, VA	#35: Applying Total Quality Management Principles to Secondary Education - Mt. Edgecumbe High School, Sitka, AK	#39: Improving Elementary School Climate - Bonneville Elementary School, Pocatello, ID
	#24: Restructuring the Curriculum to Promote Child-Initiated Activity - South Colby Elementary School, Port Orchard, WA	#28: Restructuring in a Multiethnic Environment - Linda Vista Elementary School, San Diego, CA	#32: Rejuvenating a Multiethnic Urban School - Shidler Elementary School, Oklahoma City, OK	#36: Preparing High School Students for the World of Work in a Tech Prep Program - St. Mary's County Public Schools, Leonardtown, MD	#40: Leading an Elementary School to "Overall Excellence" - Thurgood Marshall Elementary School, Seattle, WA

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School, Community and Professional Development Program

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT RESEARCH SERIES
"Research You Can Use"

Topical Synthesis #8

Community-Based Learning: A Foundation for Meaningful Educational Reform

Thomas R. Owens
Changhua Wang

In my community experience, I went from learning what something is, to applying it to real life. I learned why I need to know the things that I learned in math class. I had a chance to work with some neat people who let me try out things for myself. The mentor really seemed to care about me as a person, and I had fun.—A Student

Introduction

Many of today's leaders in education, business, and community development are coming to realize, even more than in the past, that schools alone cannot prepare our youth for productive adulthood. These leaders are ready to try new approaches that link learning activities in classrooms with a full range of learning experiences available in our communities.

Perhaps more important than the views of adults are the views of young people about themselves and their schools. Students often complain that their classes are irrelevant, not related to what occurs outside of the classroom, and lacking opportunities for hands-on applications. They feel they are treated as children instead of being given adult responsibilities. They feel cut off from meaningful relationships with caring adults. As a result, they are often unmotivated to study and view education as something imposed by adults rather than an exciting opportunity for them to develop their skills and contribute to others. In short, there is a growing consensus that change is needed in education, not only in reforming *what* is taught but also in *how* and *where* it is taught.

This topical synthesis summarizes what we have learned over the past 20 years about various community-based learning programs and describes how community-based learning can serve as an important contribution to educational reform in the future. The paper first defines what we mean by community-based learning and discusses it as a philosophy, program, set of strategies, and expected outcomes. Next, we describe the advantages of having multiple outcomes for community-based learning that include a youth development perspective. We review the barriers that have faced this form of learning. The research regarding community-based learning is discussed, followed by its contribution to educational reform. Finally, we state some conclusions and recommendations for future directions. Following the text we cite key references and general references.

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School, Community and Professional Development Program

What is Community-Based Learning?

This synthesis uses the term *community-based learning* as a broad framework that includes service-learning, experiential learning, School-to-Work, youth apprenticeship, lifelong learning and other types. A problem with these individual approaches is that each focuses on only a portion of the learning outcomes that can potentially be achieved through community-based learning. For example, service-learning concentrates on learning emerging from service provided to meet important needs—such as cleaning up our rivers—in a particular community, while School-to-Work generally focuses only on preparing youth for employment.

We define community-based learning as the broad set of teaching/learning strategies that enable youth and adults to learn what they want to learn from any segment of the community. Our definition provides for learners of all ages to identify what they wish to learn and opens up an unlimited set of resources to support them. By *community*, we are including the schools, formal and informal institutions in one's neighborhood, and the entire world through such resources as the Internet.

Principles of community-based learning relate to the changing nature of society, the learner, the learning processes, and sources for learning. These principles have been articulated and refined over a five-year period by participants in a summer seminar organized by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory and focused on future directions in work-relevant education. This group, in preparing *A Model for Restructuring Education for the 21st Century* (Owens 1994), identified several critical assumptions that can serve as a foundation for community-based learning:

- Education must be viewed as a continuum from preschool through lifelong education for adults.
- Learning is what we do for ourselves. It therefore requires the full involvement of the learner as well as the teacher/mentor.
- Jobs in the future will require not only more education, but a different type of education that includes critical thinking, teamwork, and the ability to apply knowledge.
- Adults need to be involved in community affairs and to balance work, family and community responsibilities.
- Problems affecting learners today are much broader than schools alone can solve. Involvement of the family, business, labor, the community, and other agencies is essential.
- Resistance by some teachers, schools, and communities to the changes implied by the above assumptions is to be expected. Helping these groups to see the need for change and to feel empowered to guide these changes is an important challenge facing the new leadership in education. Without this vision, supported by adequate resources and staff development, these changes are unlikely to occur.

Examples of Community-Based Learning Programs

Many programs have been funded and developed that involve important elements of community-based learning. A few of them are described here briefly, and their contributions to the learning process are discussed in the next section. Service-learning, Experience-Based Career Education, Cooperative Education, Tech Prep, School-to-Work, and Youth Apprenticeship are some of the more common ones.

Service-Learning

The National and Community Service Act of 1990 (amended in 1993) defined service-learning as a method of teaching and learning: 1) by which young people learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service experiences that meet community needs and that are coordinated with the school and community; 2) that is integrated into the academic curriculum or provides structured time for a young person to think, talk, or write about what he/she did and saw during the service activity; 3) that provides young people with opportunities to use newly acquired academic skills and knowledge in real-life situations in their own communi-

ties; and 4) that enhances what is taught in the school by extending student learning beyond the classroom and into the community and helps to foster the development of a sense of caring for others (Alliance for Service-Learning in Education Reform 1993, p. 971).

In a more abbreviated form, service-learning has been defined by the National Service-Learning Cooperative as "a teaching/learning method that connects meaningful community service experiences with academic learning, personal growth, and civic responsibility" (Poulsen 1994, p. 4). The National and Community Service Trust Act was signed in 1994 to create opportunities for young people to become personally involved in improving their communities while pursuing their personal and social development. As stated in the recent Youth Preparation for Employment policy reference document (Council of Chief State School Officers 1994, p. 23),

> Service represents a point of interface between school-, community- and work-site learning and can be used at almost any point in the youth development continuum, kindergarten through post high school. Service-learning represents an opportunity for schools and postsecondary institutions to work with employers and young people to provide meaningful opportunities for community service combined with the academic and technical skills that employers require. For children, it offers exposure to the world of work and community and provides a context for building academic and work readiness skills. For youth, it offers valuable explorations into and experiences with real world needs which can be addressed through action and initiative while further solidifying their work readiness, academic and technical skills. Service represents a holistic approach to youth development and the building of multiple competencies.

Experience Based Career Education

Experience Based Career Education (EBCE) was developed by four regional educational laboratories in the early 1970s. As Bucknam and Brand (1983) state:

> EBCE was designed to bridge the gap between study and experience and between the classroom and the community. It takes the subject matter students normally study, adds many new ingredients about people, jobs, self, and the way communities work, and lets high school and post-secondary students learn about them in the community through direct interaction with adults in all walks of life. In the process students earn academic credit, explore the real dimensions of many careers, learn much about who they are and what they want to become, and master many of the skills they will need to succeed as adults in America (p. 66).

Recently, Shumer (1995) has stated that:

> Many of the [EBCE] programs included service-learning activities, with students working in hospitals, schools, day-care centers, and many social agencies. Students tied their community learning experiences to classes held on campus, usually as part of their regular academic program. In many ways, these EBCE programs were more integrated into the curriculum than most service-learning programs today (p. 2).

The concepts of EBCE first developed in the early 1970s have generated some projects that have continued on for over 20 years. They have also served as the springboard for a new set of programs funded by the U.S. Department of Education, called Community-Based Education Centers, that are being coordinated by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory in six communities across the United States.

Cooperative Education

Cooperative education is probably the most common form of community-based learning program used by the schools. It was offered by 47 percent of the nation's public high schools in 1991-92 (Stern, et al. 1994, p. 5). In most cases, cooperative education is a paid experience in which students are employed in jobs directly related to the vocational courses they are studying in high school or college. Students receive school credit for this supervised

work. The level of coordination between the school staff and the employers varies widely from program to program. While associated mainly with high schools or community colleges, cooperative education programs have operated successfully at a number of public and private colleges.

As a federally funded program, cooperative education has been defined in the 1990 Perkins Amendment as

> ...a method of instruction of vocational education for individuals who, through written cooperative arrangements between the school and employers, receive instruction, including required academic courses and related vocational instruction, by alternation of study in school with a job in any occupational field. Such alternation shall be planned and supervised by the school and employers so that each contributes to the student's education and to his or her employability (Stern, et al. 1994, p. 13).

Tech Prep

Tech Prep is a federally funded program begun under the Tech Prep Education Act as part of the 1990 Perkins Amendment. Tech Prep programs are operating in all 50 states through consortia involving secondary and postsecondary institutions in collaboration with business and industry. Generally, these programs start in at least 11th grade and encourage students to complete an associate degree or higher. Vocational curricula focusing on high technology areas are combined with applied academic courses that are designed to prepare students for success in high-performance workplaces. While cooperative education is generally perceived as a course or program, Tech Prep is viewed by some as a specific program focused primarily on the average student and by others as an educational reform measure intended for *all* secondary students. Key elements intended for all students include career counseling, an individual student plan, and often career clusters or pathways that all secondary students are expected to chose from in order to give direction in the high school courses they select to take.

School-to-Work

The School-to-Work Opportunities Act signed into law on May 4, 1994 is one of the newcomers to the community-based learning club. Districts receiving School-to-Work funds are expected to have three major elements: 1) school-based learning related to each student's interests, including broad-based academics, career exploration and counseling; 2) work-based learning that provides a planned program of job training experiences, paid work experience, workplace mentoring, and instruction in general workplace competencies and in a broad variety of elements of an industry; and 3) activities to connect the two through training of teachers, counselors, and mentors and through involvement of schools and employers.

As with Tech Prep, School-to-Work is perceived by some educators to be a program with specific students enrolled and by others as an educational reform strategy involving all students. The legislation itself stresses that School-to-Work is intended for all students and is meant to be systemic reform. As with other educational reform efforts, School-to-Work is sometimes associated with only a portion of the community-based learning continuum and thus fails to achieve its potential impact.

Youth Apprenticeship

While the above examples of community-based learning are governed by federal legislation and funding, youth apprenticeship, as conceived by Steven Hamilton (1990) and others, draws on Hamilton's study of apprenticeships in Germany and programs such as the Finance Academy in the United States. Hamilton has described youth apprenticeship as involving workplaces as learning environments, creating opportunities for mentor relationships to provide adult role models, and developing the high levels of academic and vocational skills being sought by employers. Youth apprenticeships are viewed by Hamilton as including "the Job Corps, Summer Training and Education Program, community service, Foxfire programs, Experience-Based Career Education, cooperative education, and informal apprenticeships" (Hamilton 1990, p. 40).

Robert Jones, Assistant U.S. Secretary of Labor for Employment and Training, has said

that, "In order to increase access, teach basic skills, and use work-related structures, we need to evolve a system in this country that is truly an American-styled apprenticeship and school to work system." (Northdurft and Jobs for the Future 1990, p. 19).

Learning Strategies of Community-Based Learning

While community-based learning involves a philosophy and programs, most service-learning educators agree that it is the learning strategies that are the most critical aspect of community-based learning. At the National Conference on Service-Learning, School Reform, and Higher Education in 1994, participants agreed that:

> The focus is changing and must change from teaching to learning; from outer-directed, "expert"-driven curriculum and methodologies to more learner-centered, experience-based, connected ways of acquiring the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for life in the world in which we now live and the rapidly changing world in which our young people will live and work (Poulsen 1994, p. 2).

What are the components of such community-based learning? Zeke Zellerman of the Association for Experiential Learning stated, at the 1994 Work Now and in the Future conference in Portland, Oregon, that there are three critical steps—framing (planning), the activity itself, and reflection (Dukehart 1994). The clearer the framing, the more the learner will get from the experience. Generally, the objectives for the learning are developed jointly by the student and the teacher/mentor. The second step is the activity itself, which can be simple or complex with many steps. The third critical step is reflection or a debriefing on what was learned. According to Zellerman, the reflection can be done alone (in the form of a journal, for example) or with a group. These discussions often include an analysis of what went right, what went wrong, and what was unexpected. The reflection sets the stage for framing the next related activity. Programs such as Experience-Based Career Education have developed detailed guides to help students process what they have learned as well as to raise questions for the future.

Other key elements of community-based learning or experiential learning include use of a mentor, student application of information collected (such as presenting it to a city council meeting), and integrating academic learning with real-world usage.

The role of mentors in community-based learning is critical. A mentor gives advice and encouragement, sharing the knowledge and wisdom of experience in a relationship that is personal and enduring (Hamilton 1990, p. 156). Mentors for youth may be described as teachers, challengers, role models, supporters, and companions. Ongoing research at Public Private Ventures indicates that the most successful mentors are those who are engaged in developmental relationships with youth and establish a strong, reliable bond through enjoyment of activities chosen together, as opposed to a prescriptive relationship in which they expected to change the youth (Morrow and Styles 1995).

The learning processes serving as a foundation for community-based learning are well grounded in cognitive research. At the heart of cognitive research is the observation that intelligence and expertise are built out of interaction with the environment, not in isolation from it. This research shows that effective learning engages both head and hand and requires both knowing and doing. In their classic book on cognitive research applications, Berryman and Bailey (1992) point out that "Passive, fragmented, and decontextualized instruction organized around generating right answers adds up to ineffective learning" (p. 68). Such decontextualized learning fails to enable students to examine the ideas they bring to the learning situation, to learn from their errors, or to look for patterns.

Educators interested in developing effective learning practices can gain important insight from looking at the nature of traditional apprenticeships. Berryman and Bailey identify six characteristics that could be applied to community-based learning:

1. Apprenticeship is a way of life and may not be recognized as a teaching effort.
2. The work to be done is the driving force.
3. There is a temporal ordering of skill acquisition from easy to more difficult.

4. Bodily performance and embodied knowledge are visible.

5. Standards of performance and evaluation of competence are implicit and often internalized by the apprentice.

6. Teachers and teaching are largely invisible.

Collins, Brown and Newman (1989) identified characteristics of ideal learning environments that are helpful to consider as we design effective community-based learning. Their model has four building blocks: content, methods, sequence, and sociology. Content involves the domain knowledge such as geography or architecture, tricks of the trade used by experts in solving problems, cognitive management strategies such as thinking and planning skills, and learning strategies such as those needed in exploring a new domain.

Teaching methods are used to help students observe, engage in, invent, or discover expert strategies in context. They include modeling, coaching, scaffolding and fading (suggestions or support initially given by the teacher), articulation to get students to identify the knowledge and problem-solving strategies they use, reflection to compare one's problem-solving strategies with those of experts, and exploration to solve problems and raise new questions.

Sequencing allows learning to be staged and involves increasing complexity of tasks and concepts needed, increasing diversity of strategies or skills used, and developing an overview before attending to details.

The sociology of learning involves reproducing the real-world environment for learning. It involves active communication with expert practitioners, intrinsic motivation for learning, cooperative learning, and competitive learning to compare the processes developed by various learners to create a product.

Frequently, a few of the above processes are used in individual community-based learning projects but seldom—if ever—are all of them systematically used in planning and carrying out learning. If they were to be used, the likelihood of more positive and consistent outcomes would increase.

Cognitive research over the past ten years has shown that the quality of cognitive performance often depends on the context in which the performance occurs. People who perform tasks well in one setting may not perform them well in other settings. Learning which is "situated" in practical, work-related contexts is both faster and more effective than learning which is purely classroom based and unrelated to the contexts in which it is to be applied (Resnick 1987).

Cognitive research is being applied today not only in schools but in industry. Erica Sorohan (1993) has identified some workplace applications of this research and illustrates five lessons learned:

- We embed learning in our individual experiences, so we learn best when we direct our own learning.

- We learn most effectively in context, so learning should be linked directly to work.

- We learn from each other, so workplaces should enable us to communicate and collaborate freely.

- We continuously create knowledge, so we need to learn how to capture what we know and share it with others.

- We learn unconsciously, so we need to learn how to recognize and question our tacit assumptions (p. 48).

The principles cited above are equally applicable to schools and workplaces.

In a study of common elements of three distinctly different types of community-based learning programs (Foxfire, EBCE, and Outward Bound), five aspects of learning strategies were identified. Common learning strategies were found to: 1) be based on an explicit theory of learning; 2) encourage learners to perform tasks normally given to adults in our society; 3) emphasize a balance of action, reflection, and application; 4) provide learning experiences that are individualized, sequential, and developmental; and 5) provide opportunities for unplanned learning from new experiences (Druian, Owens, and Owen 1995).

Given the above discussion of characteristics of effective learning, Berryman (1995) raises the

question of where cognitive apprenticeship skills can best be learned—the schools or in workplaces. The answer is that they can be learned in either place if the conditions are right. To help reach a decision for a particular community, Berryman poses four useful questions (pp. 209-213):

1. Is the location organized to deliver effective and efficient learning?

2. Does the learning location reflect the knowledge demands of the workplace and the work contexts in which knowledge and skill have to be used?

3. Does the learning location deliver knowledge and skills that are broadly applicable?

4. Does the learning location blur the division between academic and vocational?

Expected Outcomes of Community-Based Learning

The outcomes of community-based learning cover the full range of knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to be an effective citizen, worker, and lifelong learner. Articles and research reports across the various categories of community-based learning suggest five major outcome areas: 1) academic, 2) career and vocational, 3) personal-social development, 4) service and work values, and 5) understanding and use of community resources.

As Robert Blum has pointed out,

> Goals for student learning are changing. While there is still an expectation that students learn important facts, there is growing emphasis on application of facts in problem solving and relating facts to life outside the school. In addition to learning traditional subject areas, students are expected to think critically, collaborate with others, transition smoothly from school to work, fit into an increasingly diverse community, integrate what they learn across subjects and much more. As the content of what is to be learned changes, so must the methodologies of both learning and teaching shift (Blum 1995, p. 8).

Andrew Furco, from the Service-Learning R&D Center at the University of California at Berkeley, has presented a systematic look at the similarities and differences of service-learning and School-to-Work transition programs. He describes the intended purposes of both reforms as career development, academic development, personal development, social development, civic responsibility, and ethical development (Furco 1995).

While many community-based learning programs include academic learning as an outcome, it is usually approached as a way to reinforce the basic concepts learned in school. Motivation to learn the basics and the ability to apply them to real life situations are the unique additions of community-based learning.

While School-to-Work and service learning cover a wide spectrum of learner outcomes, a third set comes from the field of youth development. These outcomes include skill in being an active and self-directed learner, leadership, and personal and social responsibility. Zeldin (1995) and others, in their attempt to integrate School-to-Work and youth development, state that young people require opportunities and supports to achieve desirable outcomes.

Two important federal initiatives provide a useful framework for looking at the learner outcomes of community-based learning—Goals 2000 and the SCANS report. The GOALS 2000: Educate America Act calls for the development of comprehensive state education strategies that result in the attainment of the national educational goals and lifelong learning systems.

Several of the national goals are being impacted directly by community-based learning. Goal 2 states that by the year 2000, the high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent. Community-based learning makes school relevant to students by connecting academic concepts to real-life applications and makes students active learners who are responsible for their own learning.

Goal 3 deals with student achievement and citizenship. It states that by the year 2000, all students will leave grades 4, 8, and 12 having demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter, including English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and

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geography, and that every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our nation's modern economy. In 1993, the nation's governors adopted service-learning as an indicator of citizenship in Goal 3.

A second curriculum framework for grouping the skills needed to be an effective worker comes from the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) in the U.S. Department of Labor. In 1993 the commission produced a useful document called *Teaching the SCANS Competencies* that illustrates how these competencies can be taught in schools and communities. The SCANS outcomes are made up of five competencies and a three-part foundation of skills and personal qualities needed for high-quality job performance. The competencies state that effective workers can productively use resources, interpersonal skills, information, systems, and technology, with each of these spelled out in greater detail. For example, interpersonal skills include working on teams, teaching others, serving customers, leading, negotiating, and working well with people from culturally diverse backgrounds. The foundations consist of basic skills (reading, writing, mathematics, speaking, and listening), thinking skills (thinking creatively, making decisions, solving problems, visualizing, knowing how to learn, and reasoning), and personal qualities (individual responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management and integrity).

A third grouping of community-based learning outcomes is a modification of the ones developed by the American Society for Training and Development (Carnevale, Gainer, and Meltzer 1990). In the ASTD book, *Workplace Basics: The Essential Skills Employers Want*, the authors identify seven areas: 1) learning to learn; 2) basic competencies in reading, writing, and computation; 3) communication skills of speaking and listening effectively; 4) problem solving and critical thinking; 5) managing personal and professional growth; 6) group effectiveness; and 7) influencing skills, including understanding of organizational climate and leadership. For each area, the authors describe what is intended, the theories that support it, and how it can be taught in schools and in the workplace, and then provide examples. As a result of seminar participation at the Menucha Summer Conference sponsored by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL) over a three-year period, participants added three outcome areas to the ASCD list: technological literacy, social-global awareness, and general occupational skills such as safety and flexibility. For each of the ten outcome areas NWREL staff, with the input of the Menucha participants, developed a set of specific learner outcomes, school delivery strategies, and family and community-based delivery strategies (Owens 1994).

Conrad and Hedin (1989), based on a review of research in the field and various large-scale evaluations they had conducted of community-based learning programs (excluding those focused on workforce preparation), identified areas where they expected such programs to have a positive effect on youth. They grouped these outcomes under three headings: personal growth and development, intellectual development and academic learning, and social growth and development. Their specific outcomes expected are listed below.

Personal Growth and Development

- Self-esteem
- Personal efficacy (sense of worth and competence)
- Ego and moral development
- Exploration of new roles, identities, and interests
- Willingness to take risks, accept new challenges
- Taking responsibility for, accepting consequences of own actions

Intellectual Development and Academic Learning

- Higher-level thinking skills
- Content and skills directly related to service experience
- Skills in learning from experience (to observe, ask questions, apply knowledge)
- Motivation to learn and retention of knowledge
- Insight, judgment, and understanding

Social Growth and Development

- Political efficacy
- Knowledge and exploration of service-related careers
- Understanding and appreciation of, and ability to relate to, people from a wide range of backgrounds and life situations

Whereas the outcomes listed above are expected, research results actually documenting some of them are discussed later in this synthesis.

Advantages to an Integrated Approach

Just as high schools are often justly criticized by students for compartmentalizing instruction—50 minutes of history, followed by algebra and then physical education, for example—so, too, do community-based learning programs sometimes focus too narrowly on outcomes immediately related to their funding. From an individual young person's perspective, it makes no sense to learn only leadership skills from the Boy Scouts, career development from a career exploration at a local company, and service-learning from a separate class that has students visiting residents in a nursing home. Fragmentation is undesirable whether it occurs in the school, a business, or a family.

A more integrated alternative can be found in certain mentorship approaches where a young person gets to know and trust an adult. The student might gain career knowledge by shadowing the mentor in his or her company. He or she might apply business management skills by accompanying the mentor into management meetings (where the student is expected to contribute to a problem-solving discussion and perhaps write a report that can be shared with the English teacher on how communications problems were identified and solved). The young person could also accompany and assist the mentor as he or she takes two hours from work each week to serve as a volunteer tutor in an inner-city elementary school.

From an organizational perspective, too, it is satisfying to combine outcomes of community-based learning. Businesses are often overwhelmed by frequent requests from schools to engage in many diverse activities—furnishing speakers, providing job shadowing, supervising a teacher or student intern, and volunteering time to tutor students in math. An alternative is to design ways that a business or other community organization can combine efforts. For example, while students are at a hospital to perform service-learning, they might also hear about the variety of occupations at the hospital, and do a science project in one of the laboratories.

Barriers to Community-Based Learning

With all that we know about the benefits of community-based learning, why has it affected relatively few educators and students, rather than becoming a mainstay of America's educational reform?

From an ideological perspective, many educators still maintain an older paradigm of education, in which its purpose is to impart to students the content knowledge possessed by the teacher. In such a paradigm there is no need for input from students about what is to be learned, when, where, or how. The teacher maintains control in directing education, and students are tested to determine the extent to which they have remembered what was taught. Under the new paradigm, teachers need to function more in the role of coach and mentor.

A second ideological barrier is the perception of many school and community people that the subject matter content they learned in school should serve as the driving force in what is taught today. Failing to recognize or acknowledge the importance of applying knowledge to real-world issues, they see community-based learning as drawing students' time and attention away from the traditional curriculum content.

From a practical perspective, community-based learning requires commitment from the top as well as from dedicated teachers. Community-based learning requires time, effort, and expense. Time is needed to allow teachers to work individually with students in identifying and planning learning objectives, in arranging for involvement of community sites, and in helping students reflect on their experiences. Other practical considerations include

liability coverage for times when students are outside the school building, transportation issues, and the need to schedule blocks of time so as to allow students sufficient time to get to and from their learning sites as well as to become active there. Orientation and training of both educators and community mentors are also essential.

It is necessary to spend time in creating an awareness among students, parents, educators, and community members of the purposes of community-based learning so that they don't see it as simply releasing students into the community without clear expectations of what is to occur. A final problem is the difficulty of effectively evaluating what is learned from student's experiences in community-based learning. This assessment is complicated by the fact that different students may be at the same learning site for different purposes, and that some community-based learning outcomes (identified in the prior section) are difficult to measure.

The Research Literature on Community-Based Learning

Much of the research on community-based learning has focused on individual programs and has assessed outcomes without a clear understanding of the elements that underlie a quality community-based learning experience. Just as students can fall asleep in their history class, so, too, can they waste time at a job site; not all workplace experiences lead to productive learning. This review of the literature first discusses the characteristics and quality of learning processes and then moves to attempts to document outcomes. We identify barriers faced in conducting quality research on community-based learning and describe some promising directions for the future.

Characteristics of High- Quality Learning Programs and Experiences

One attempt to identify common characteristics of programs classified under the broad heading of School-to-Work was made by the National Center for Research in Vocational Education in its publication, *Research on School-to-Work Transition Programs in the United States*. The researchers identified fourteen features and determined the relative frequency of these features in six programs: Cooperative Education, School-Based Enterprise, Tech Prep, School-to-Apprenticeship, Youth Apprenticeship, and Career Academies. The fourteen features were: 1) structured work-based learning while in school, 2) school curriculum that builds on work experience, 3) paid work experience, 4) employer-provided financial support, 5) program-arranged student work placement, 6) employer involvement in curriculum design, 7) integrated vocational and academic curriculum, 8) formal links to postsecondary education, 9) employment/ college counseling, 10) pre-11th grade academic preparation, 11) pre-11th grade career exploration, 12) targeting of at-risk or non-college bound students, (13) use of outside mentors, and 14) occupational certification (Stern, et al. 1994, p. 8).

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory staff conducted a study of over 1,000 EBCE students in 24 states to determine young people's perceptions of what characteristics of a worksite are important for quality learning (Owens 1982). In addition to open-ended questions about their experiences at learning sites, students were asked to rate the importance of each of 19 characteristics in contributing to an excellent learning opportunity. At worksites judged by students as providing rich learning experiences, they

- More often learned job-specific skills including use of tools or equipment and gained specific knowledge of how the job operates through hands-on experiences
- More often described the people they worked with as helpful and friendly
- Generally worked closely with more than one person and formed a personal relationship with at least one person with whom they worked
- Reported completing tasks (judged by outside consultants) to have high or moderate levels of responsibility and were perceived to be challenging. (Owens 1982, pp. 89-90)

At a broader level, Goldberger, Kazis and O'Flanagan (1994) have identified characteristics of high-quality environments that provide

structure and support for young people. They found that such worksite learning requires the following:

- Partners formally agree on the goals of the work-based program and how to achieve them.
- Student learning at the workplace progresses according to a structured plan.
- Work-based experiences promote the development of broad, transferable skills.
- School-based activities help students distill and deepen lessons of work experience.
- The program prepares students to enter the workplace.
- Ongoing support and counseling is provided for students.
- Orientation, training, and ongoing support to worksite and school staff are provided.
- Administrative structures exist to coordinate and manage the worksite component.
- Mechanisms are in place to assure the quality of students' work-based learning experiences.

Research conducted by staff at the Center for Youth Development and Policy Research has identified five key opportunities and supports needed to achieve desirable youth outcomes:

- Opportunities for active and self-directed learning
- Opportunities to take on new roles and responsibilities
- Ongoing emotional support from adults and peers
- Ongoing motivational support and high standards from adults, and
- Ongoing access to strategic support and social networks (Zeldin 1995, p. 10-11)

In the past, practitioners involved in community-based learning were often not interested in participating in program evaluation and sometimes saw it as interfering with students' progress. This attitude seems to have changed in recent years, as evaluation has shifted in emphasis toward continuous quality improvement, and as educators have become more sensitive to the needs of legislators and the public for accountability.

Other barriers to effective research and evaluation of community-based learning have been the lack of a definition and theoretical framework for much of the evaluation, differences in the quality and intensity of programs labeled School-to-Work or service-learning, the difficulty of measuring some of the skills and affective outcomes of community-based learning, and the confusion about how each program or practice may contribute to total educational reform.

Learner Outcomes

One of the earliest and most intensively evaluated School-to-Work programs has been Experience-Based Career Education. Bucknam and Brand (1983) conducted a meta-analysis of 80 evaluations of EBCE programs. They start by distinguishing EBCE from traditional work/education programs. In contrast to other programs, EBCE was found to: 1) use planned experience as a basis for learning academic subjects; 2) include career exploration and multiple employer/community site utilization as opposed to job experience at a single site; 3) expect students to take a greater role in shaping their personalized educational plans; 4) be appropriate for and used with all types of students; and 5) use community worksites for learning rather than for production purposes, so students earn academic credit rather than pay.

In terms of student learning outcomes, Bucknam and Brand found positive academic gains in 376 of 558 test administrations, including 112 where the differences were significantly positive. When compared to similar students not in EBCE, students in EBCE scored significantly higher in career-related skills, life skills, and in academic skills.

A comprehensive evaluation of the four EBCE demonstration sites was conducted over a several-year period by Educational Testing Service. This evaluation involved use of standardized tests, in-depth interviews of EBCE and control group students, survey questionnaires, and ethnographic studies by

trained anthropologists. They found that EBCE students, in contrast to a control group:

- Have a knowledge of a greater number of career areas
- Know more of the personal and school-related characteristics and abilities that are necessary for entry into careers of interest
- Are more positive in their attitudes toward career planning
- Are better able to respond orally to interviewers' complex questions, and
- Had no greater gains in basic skills as measured by a standardized test (Owens 1982)

The NCRVE study of School-to-Work programs (Stern, et al. 1994) found that participation in cooperative education was associated with more positive attitudes toward school and a stronger perceived connection between school and work, but no consistent association between participation in cooperative education and subsequent success in the labor market.

The study of cooperative education by the Office of Technology Assessment (1995) found that programs nominated as being of high quality had

> participation by employers who are willing to provide training in occupations with promising career paths, screening of applicants to assure that they are prepared to meet employers' expectations, training plans with ambitious and specific learning objectives, and, for high school students, close monitoring of the worksite activities by school representatives (p. 68).

When service-learning is not mandated, the outcomes on students are generally positive. For example, Krug (1991) found significant differences in self-esteem and attitudes toward the school and community between high school students involved in a school-sponsored service-learning experience and those not involved.

Shumer (1994), in studying a community-based Job Training Partnership Act program for high school students, found that learning in the community improved attendance and school grades. This was facilitated especially by the use of adults and college students in helping students to learn.

Some of the most comprehensive evaluation of service-learning (commonly called "experiential education" in the 1980s) was conducted by Conrad and Hedin at the University of Minnesota. Their study involved 4,000 students in 33 programs and included comparison group students. The programs included volunteer service, political and social action, outdoor adventure, internships in government and business, and research in the community. The opportunities to act autonomously and to develop collegial relationships with adults were the two most powerful predictors of personal growth. In their review of others' research findings, Conrad and Hedin (1989) found that service-learning generally increases students' sense of personal and social responsibility, more positive attitudes toward adults and toward those served, enhanced self-esteem, growth in moral and ego development, and complex patterns of thought.

The research literature on required community service is mixed and generally fails to support requiring high school students to participate in it. For example, Crossman (1989) found that required community service did not produce as much improvement as voluntary service. Patterson (1987) found, in fact, that while fewer than 20 hours of required service had little impact, required participation for more than 20 hours may have a negative impact on the process of self-actualization. On the other hand, Giles and Eyler (1994) found that a required service-learning experience of limited intensity and duration has a positive impact on the development of college students: they showed a significant increase in their belief that people can make a difference, that they should be involved in community service, and in their commitment to perform volunteer service the following semester.

Systemic Approach to Community-Based Learning

A new movement has emerged recently to examine the similarities and differences between service-learning and School-to-Work and to focus on linkages. At a conference conducted in June 1995 and titled School Improvement: Strategies for Connecting Schools and Communities, the Secretary of Education, Richard Riley, and Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation for National Service, Eli Segal, signed a formal agreement to work together to link service-learning and School-to-Work. The conference was attended by state teams representing both sectors.

The Council of Chief State Schools Officers, in a 1994 memorandum, presented commonalties and a rationale for linking School-to-Work and service-learning. As quoted from Bhaerman (1995),

> Both provide environments in which students can develop various skills and competencies including those identified by the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skill (SCANS) that are important for employment and responsible citizenship; both provide students with meaningful roles in their communities; and both foster collaboration between educators and community groups. The memorandum also presents several rationales for linking the two methodologies including the following: both have the potential to address such weaknesses as the lack of relevance of the curriculum or school experience; both can motivate students to want to learn; both can build community partnerships; and both focus on outcomes as a measure of acquired skills and knowledge. Service learning can help address issues of "scale and access" in school-to-work transition....Combining the approaches in a "learning continuum" can provide even primary grade students with opportunities to develop generic work skills at an early age (p. 2).

Service-learning also has an appeal to many parents and community groups, is relatively easy to start, and covers areas of a curriculum such as civics and government generally not addressed by School-to-Work. On the other hand, School-to-Work offers good links in the curriculum between academic and vocational education, presents a model for a four- or six-year curriculum sequence, stresses documentation of skills gained and transportable credentials, builds in adult mentorship, and has good support from the business community. By linking service-learning, School-to-Work and other forms of community-based learning, educators can build a much stronger rationale for the use of the community for learning and broaden their community support base.

Conclusions and Future Directions

This topical synthesis paper has integrated a great deal of current literature related to contextual learning theory and its application in community-based learning. While the research base on essential components of high-quality learning in the community is moderate, research to prove the validity of outcomes expected from community-based learning is still weak. New strategies, such as the application of cost-benefit analysis to service-learning, are emerging that can complement some of the qualitative research and provide support to those needing to justify the costs of such programs.

Although there are many programs that could be labeled community-based learning, few educators have yet used this term or started to sell community-based learning as a broad set of strategies to enhance educational reform. Likewise, many of the programs called service-learning or School-to-Work are very fragmented, and students often receive only minimal exposure to the array of learning potential that exists in the community. Similarly, very few community-based learning programs come close to systematically using the principles described in this synthesis for quality contextual learning.

New efforts have been implemented recently to place educators in the community for their own learning to identify workplace applications for the subjects they teach. In some cases, companies like The Boeing Company in Seattle have provided slots for secondary and postsecondary teachers to explore worksites

for the summer and to prepare lesson plans based on their new learning (Owens and Wang 1994). In other cases, teams of academic and vocational teachers have been prepared to visit companies and community agencies to identify applications of work-based tasks related to their school subject content (Stone-Ewing 1995). Educators have also accepted invitations from businesses and community agencies, including government, to participate in training in areas such as continuous quality improvement.

The examples and issues discussed in this synthesis have focused on student learning in the community. However, it is important for educators to keep abreast of workforce training that is taking place for existing workers. Such training costs billions of dollars annually. Simulations, group problem solving, and other strategies are being used effectively in many industries and may have applications for public education.

Another element related to educational reform is the transformation of some businesses into "learning organizations." Although originating in business and industry, the learning organization concept is starting to be applied in some schools, with all staff and students working in open and supportive learning environments. Drucker (1995) has written recently about the societal transformation to learning communities taking place throughout the world.

If community-based learning is to contribute its full potential to school and educational improvement, the following five changes appear needed:

1. Staff involved in School-to-Work, service-learning and other forms of community-based learning will need to collaborate with each other to present a unified message to educators and the community that there are diverse and purposeful roles community members can play in helping young people learn and mature.

2. The research on contextual learning will need to be studied more closely by educators, so that they can develop and operate community-based learning efforts that are of high quality and likely to produce significant results in students.

3. Focused research is needed on student outcomes of community-based learning programs and efforts that are based on the contextual research literature. This research needs to be implemented on a multi-year basis since the outcomes expected seldom occur in a single year.

4. Educators will continue to need greater inservice and preservice training in identifying specific ways their subject content is being used in community settings or what new content should be infused into their courses to make them more relevant to the real world. They will also need training on the philosophy and methodology to support community-based learning so as to make it an integral part of their total educational program.

5. Practitioners involved in separate School-to-Work, service-learning, and youth development programs need to come together to identify common ground, share their expertise, and learn from each other's efforts.

Legislators and policy makers also have a major role to play in fostering integration of community-based learning by broadening the scope of expected outcomes. Michele Cahill (1993), in reporting the consensus of the New York City Youth Employment Consortium, stated,

> For programs to be effective in positioning participants on pathways to success they have to go beyond a narrow focus on acquisition of job skills or even behavioral changes... Youth must meet needs and build competencies in many areas of their lives at the same time as they are acquiring vocational skill (Cited by Zeldin 1995, p. 9).

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Distinguishes between apprenticeship as a paradigm for learning and as the optimal location for learning. In discussing where apprenticeships should be located—the workplace or the school—Berryman identifies four criteria in the form of questions that can be applied to help decide the appropriate location for learning.

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Describes a school-to-career model that balances education and employment/career goals. Outlines a high school reform agenda that integrates abstract and practical learning and includes all students; discusses the important role of work-based learning and the need for secondary and postsecondary integration.

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Discusses the background of efforts to integrate academic and vocational education, a description of eight approaches to integration (with particular attention to the academy model, career pathways, magnet schools, and senior projects), and the pedagogy of curriculum integration. The new pedagogy is especially geared to teaching problem solving, higher-order reasoning, and teamwork skills—which are all being demanded by today's employers.

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Hamilton, S. F. *Apprenticeship for Adulthood: Preparing Youth for the Future.* New York: The Free Press, 1990.

Draws upon the author's experience in the United States and Germany to explain how apprenticeship uses workplaces as learning environments; creates opportunities for mentor relationships; and develops the flexibility, dependability, and vocational skills needed in the workplace. Although he uses the term "apprenticeship," what Hamilton is really describing is a much broader array of experiences often referred to as Youth Apprenticeship. This mix includes career exploration, integrated academic instruction, structured job training, and paid work experience.

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SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT RESEARCH SERIES
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Educating for Citizenship

Kathleen Cotton

The real test of any citizenship program is what participants do in their lifetime office of citizen.
—Naylor 1990

Introduction

Nearly all writers on the subject of citizenship education agree that it is essential for preserving America's democratic way of life. Indeed, they often remind us that our nation's founders saw the preparation of competent citizens as the main purpose of schooling (Center for Civic Education 1994, v). Many contemporary people, too, believe that education's chief purpose is to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and values needed to function effectively as citizens of a democratic society (Wood 1988). And those who cite other educational goals as equally important (e.g., Boyer 1990) still concur that citizenship development is a significant aim of the schooling process.

Definition

Butts defines civic education as "explicit and continuing study of the basic concepts and values underlying our democratic political community and constitutional order" (quoted in Hoge 1988). The *Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors* says that it consists of

> Learning activities, curriculum, and/or educational programs at any educational level, concerned with rights and responsibilities of citizenship—the purpose is to promote knowledge, skills, and attitudes conducive to effective participation in civic life (Houston 1990, 37).

Few disagree with these broad definitions. It is when we begin to specify *what* knowledge, skills, and attitudes ought to be taught and *how* they ought to be taught that we encounter differences of opinion. Some researchers and other writers contend, for example, that civic education should include attention to the global context in which the U.S. is situated; others do not. Some believe that teachers should give students classroom practice in grappling with the kinds of controversial issues they will face as adults; others disagree. Later in this paper I discuss the themes that emerge from the literature on the content and processes of civic education.

The Literature on Citizenship Education

Beginning with an ERIC search and proceeding through the bibliographies of the materials I retrieved initially, I screened scores of documents and ultimately selected the 93 on

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which this report is based. Sixty-three are reports of research studies or reviews, most of which reveal relationships between educational practices and student outcomes related to citizenship (see Key References). Thirty are critiques, concept papers, program descriptions, standards documents, and demographic reports, whose content is congruent with that of the research documents (see General References).

Thirty-eight of the reports focus either on students in general or on an unspecified student population. The focus of the others are elementary students (7), secondary (26), elementary and secondary (3); both students and adults (5), adult citizens (3); both students and teachers (4), preservice or inservice teachers (5), principals (1), ESL students (1); and textbooks (1).

The literature describes dozens of schooling practices used in different citizenship education efforts and the student outcomes associated with those practices. I discuss these in subsequent sections.

Educated for Citizenship—An Admirable Goal

Civic education goal statements tend to be lofty in both content and language. According to the Center for Civic Education's 1994 standards document, for example,

> It has been recognized since the founding of the nation that education has a civic mission: to prepare informed, rational, humane, and participating citizens committed to the values and principles of American constitutional democracy (v).

In a similar vein, Mabe states,

> We want citizens who are informed, autonomous, respectful of others, who participate in the political process, who keep the common good in mind in their decision making, and finally, we want citizens who act responsibly (1993, 153).

Two of the National Education Goals express inspiring visions for citizenship education. Goal 3, Student Achievement and Citizenship, reads,

> By the year 2000, all students will leave grades 4, 8, and 12 having demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter, including... civics and government...so that they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment....All students will be involved in activities that promote and demonstrate...good citizenship, community service, and personal responsibility (*Goals 2000* 1994, 8).

Goal 6, Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning, includes the following statement:

> By the year 2000, every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to... exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship (13).

Informed, autonomous, respectful, participating, mindful of the common good, committed to democratic values and principles. This profile of the qualified citizen reappears throughout the civic education literature, together with assertions about the critical role of education in preparing capable citizens. Given this widely shared priority, one might expect to find an abundance of highly competent citizens across the country, together with vigorous educational programs to guarantee continued fulfillment of our citizenship goals.

Our Lack of Civic Preparedness

Unfortunately, what one finds instead is depressing commentary after depressing commentary about the sorry state of civic knowledge, skills, and attitudes on the part of U.S. citizens—both students and adults. Nearly every writer whose work was consulted for this report expressed dismay at our nation's want of civic preparedness (e.g., Avery 1982; Avery, et al. 1992, 1993; Berman 1990; Colville and Clarken 1992; Dynneson 1992a,b; Fowler 1990; Franzosa 1989; Golden 1985; Harwood 1990; Hastings 1986; Hoge 1988; Miller 1985; Patrick 1987, 1988; Sinatra, Beck, and McKeown 1992; Sleeper, Strong, and

Zabierek 1990). No one spoke well of our civic education efforts or their results. Colville and Clarken's observations are representative:

> [S]tudies show that traditional citizenship education has failed our youth dismally in attempting to develop them into knowledgeable, active citizens.... Consequently, many graduates and nongraduates are quasi-illiterate or functionally illiterate about the basic principles and values on which our political system and society are based (1992, 7).

In a similar vein, Hoge (1988) comments,

> [M]ore than half of young Americans lack knowledge, attitudes, and skills that leading civic educators believe they should have in order to be responsible citizens of a constitutional democracy. Most high school students and adults appear to lack detailed knowledge and understanding of institutions, principles, and processes of government in the United States. They also tend to have shallow or confounded conceptions of core ideas, such as constitutionalism, republicanism, democracy, and federalism (3).

Golden remarks succinctly,

> If one of the vital signs used to measure health of the "body politic" is the percentage of citizens that vote, U.S. democracy is the sickest in the world (1985, 14).

Sleeper, Strom, and Zabierek add to this indictment:

> Various reports on the state of American education have found that our young people suffer from historical amnesia, geographic disorientation, and civic ignorance. Statistics on adult civic behavior are no more reassuring....(1990, 84).

Avery (1988) notes,

> Disparity between individuals' support for abstract democratic principles and their willingness to apply such principles to concrete situations has been documented in numerous studies of both adults and adolescents....Most adults, regardless of ideology, are unwilling to extend basic civil liberties to the group they dislike the most (534).

Looking at findings about young people's attitudes toward civic participation, Berman remarks,

> Young people in the United States are expressing a sense of powerlessness to affect constructive social or political change. To the young, the odds of success seem overwhelming, the personal costs high, the disappointments inevitable (1990, 75).

Finally, according to Franzosa (1989), civic participation and civic attitudes are deteriorating over time:

> High school graduates in the last fifteen years have proven themselves less likely than previous generations to exercise their rights as citizens. They participate less often in state, local, and national elections, express alienation and even cynicism concerning the political process, and show a distressing ignorance of contemporary issues likely to affect their country's future (6).

The Current State of Civic Education

If everyone agrees that civic preparedness is vitally important, why do we lack it on such a grand scale? Critics of civic education—and they are many—say that the components of competent citizenship are simply not taught in American schools. Instead, they say, the content we teach and the way we teach it virtually occlude the citizenship results we say we want. Kickbusch's comments are typical of those who study the current norms of citizenship instruction:

> Frequently textbook bound, such instruction...is oriented toward the acquisition of unproblematic knowledge and passive acceptance of social

> institutions....Critics...have faulted this approach to citizenship education for its failure to develop critical decision-making skills, its inattention to values issues, its failure to utilize the existing social science knowledge base, and for its passive, classroom-based processes (1987, 174).

Patrick's research summary declares, "Studies of standard secondary school textbooks have revealed restricted coverage and shallow treatment of basic principles, values, and issues of constitutional government" (1987, 3). Reporting his research on civics lessons in secondary social studies classes, Hyland (1985) corroborates these findings and cites additional problems:

> Selection of content was narrow in scope and lacked depth of treatment. Students were not involved in skills of rational analysis and decision making appropriate for participation in a democratic society (8).

Newmann (1989) echoes these findings and speculates on the reasons for such lackluster teaching:

> Authentic discourse is usually suppressed by the belief that the purpose of teaching is to transmit fixed knowledge to students (so they can reproduce it in identical form for teachers who reward students for playing the game of telling teachers what they want to hear rather than asking and answering questions that students consider important) and by enormous efforts to keep order and control over masses of students (359).

The literature includes many different kinds of indictments of the current state of civic education. I have listed these criticisms together with the research studies and other examinations that led to these conclusions:

- **General**. Citizenship education has been neglected; it has been assigned a low curricular priority; and its student outcomes are frequently not specified (Boyer 1990; Eveslage 1993; Finklestein 1993; Goodlad 1986; Hyland 1985; Patrick 1987; Pereira 1988a). Goodlad writes, "One of the most surprising shortcomings of the curriculum planning process is the general absence of any continuing, sustained appraisal of what is essential for young people to learn" (432).

- **Lack of meaning**. Teachers too often present isolated facts apart from any context that might give meaning to those facts (Goodlad 1986; Newmann 1987, 1989; Patrick 1987).

- **Irrelevance**. Teachers do not typically connect classroom content to students' life experiences or to contemporary issues of interest to them (Blankenship 1990; Hyland 1985; Newmann 1989; Patrick 1987).

- **Lack of focus on rights**. Civic education typically fails to address tolerance for the expression of individual freedoms, as guaranteed in the Constitution and Bill of Rights (Avery 1988; Avery, et al. 1992; Butts 1988; Hoge 1988).

- **Lack of training in thinking and process skills**. Teachers do not, for the most part, provide training or practice in critical thinking, problem solving, decision making or other process skills (Avery, et al. 1993; Callan 1994; Berman 1990; Levitt and Longstreet 1993; Hyland 1985; Kickbusch 1987; Hoge 1988).

- **Passive learning**. Most citizenship education limits students to passive learning (Eveslage 1993; Finklestein 1993; Goodlad 1986; Kickbusch 1987; Newmann 1987, 1989; Pereira 1988a; Thomas 1984; Drisko 1993). Writes Goodlad, "Research on classrooms revealed excessive student passivity—listening to their teachers lecture, reading textbooks and taking quizzes" (424).

- **Avoidance of controversial topics**. Either out of fear of complaints (e.g., from parents) or out of personal preference, teachers typically are unwilling to take up in the classroom the social controversies that arise in a democratic society and must be addressed by its citizens (Eveslage 1993; Kickbusch 1987; Levitt and Longstreet 1993). According to Levitt and Longstreet,

> Among today's teachers, there is a widespread reluctance to engage in teaching any but the safest of civic values—that is, values at such a level of generality and acceptance that no one would feel threatened....as soon as the topic discussed reflects a reality of life beyond school walls, that is, an authentic civic value that makes a difference to our lives in immediate terms, controversy is likely (142).

- **Teacher control, student obedience**. Although the stated goals of civic education include democratic values and skill in democratic processes, civic education typically occurs entirely within a model of total teacher control and total student obedience. Critics are more upset about this than any other aspect of typical citizenship education (Eveslage 1993; Ross and Bondy 1993; Hyland 1985; Newmann 1989; Wood 1988). According to Wood, "Many of the goals of schooling...stress conformity, obedience, and rote memory... The goals most certainly conflict with a pedagogy for democracy that has at its heart the goal of preparing independent thinkers who are willing to act on their own initiative" (298).

- **Low-track students, low-quality curriculum**. Research reveals a strong correlation between "low ability" and anti-democratic traits such as authoritarianism and intolerance. Research also reveals that low-track students frequently experience particularly uninspiring, ineffectual instruction. Those who study civic education assert that we must offer all students high-quality instruction if we are ever to inculcate in them the democratic dispositions we value (Avery 1988; Avery, et al. 1992; Goodlad 1986; Sidelnick 1989). Sidelnick writes, "Social studies educators should seek ways to increase support of the fundamental freedoms and explore strategies to decrease the dogmatism or close-minded attitudes evident in many low-ability and average adolescents" (96).

- **Lack of attention to global issues**. Many contributors to the civic education literature expressed distress that the typical curriculum virtually ignores the global context in which the U.S. is situated (Collins 1993; Drake 1987; Goodlad 1986; Sinatra, Beck, and McKeown 1992). Collins remarks that, "In too many schools, we are still teaching about the world as if it were a 1939 map. In too many classrooms, the dramatic changes that have completely altered the world are ignored completely or relegated to a weekly current events activity with little, if any, relationship to the curriculum" (25).

- **Limited, shallow text content**. Most social studies texts used for citizenship education are restricted in their content, superficial in their treatment of subject matter, and present facts apart from their context (Avery, et al. 1992; Eveslage 1993; Patrick 1987; Wade and Everett 1994). Avery, et al. note that, "High school government and civics texts...continue to emphasize isolated bits of information about governmental institutions and processes. In-depth examinations of key constitutional issues are virtually non-existent....In an effort to avoid potential controversy, most textbook publishers give such questions only superficial coverage" (382).

- **Text-bound instruction**. The limited subject matter and uninspired treatment in civic texts might not matter so much if teachers used a rich array of other resources. Research shows, however, that most civics instruction is text-bound (Boyer 1990; Eveslage 1993; Finklestein 1993; Kickbusch 1987; Patrick 1987; Wade and Everett 1994). Eveslage's review indicates that ninety percent of teachers rely on textbooks as their primary instructional tool (83), and Finklestein's investigation of citizenship education for young children reveals that "the textbook dominates primary social studies instruction" (68).

- **Inappropriate assessment**. Civic education continues to be dominated by the use of standardized tests to assess learning and the use of letter grades to report learning (Adler, Luhn, and Philbin 1993; Finklestein 1993, Parker 1989, 1990; Rudner 1991). In addition, there is a lack of evaluative criteria for civic education—criteria as to "what learning experiences are most effective, which public controversies, past and present, are most profitably studied and discussed" (Parker 1989, 354).

Researchers and other writers also express considerable dismay over the inadequate preparation of teachers for providing civics education and the insufficient support provided by principals. The social studies teachers who were the subjects in Hyland's research were unable to provide adequate explanations of why the Constitution was written (1985, 4). A high percentage of those in Wolf's 1990 study performed poorly on a ten-item, multiple-choice test about Constitutional principles. In Stanton's 1987 research with preservice teachers, two-thirds scored below the midpoint on an instrument used to assess teachers' civic education knowledge. Kickbusch's classroom observational study revealed "a paucity of teaching skills with which to support...civic education goals" (1987, 178). And in a study of 70 elementary principals, "only two principals identified the formal social studies curriculum as a means to achieve citizenship education outcomes" (Tucker 1986, 8).

Attributes of a Prepared Citizen—What the Researchers Say

"Some critics have charged that citizenship education is at once so vague and all-encompassing that it can mean anything to anybody" (Parker 1990, 18). Butts (1988) remarks that,

> Nothing is more common than for curriculum guidelines to proclaim the teaching of democratic values as a major goal of public education in general and of social studies in particular, but then to fail to make such values explicit or clearly visible in the content or scope and sequence of topics they recommend for study (3).

What do we mean when we say that citizenship education ought to focus on "democratic values," and "the public good," and develop "civic skills"? While the researchers and other civic education scholars are not in total consonance about the ideal results of citizenship education, there is considerable agreement about the desirability—and meaning—of the following outcomes:

- **Democratic values**. Prepared citizens understand and are committed to the values inherent in the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights: justice, freedom, equality, diversity, authority, privacy, due process, property, participation, truth, patriotism, human rights, rule of law, tolerance, mutual assistance, personal and civic responsibility, self-restraint and self-respect (Butts 1988; Colville and Clarken 1992; Drisko 1993; Hoge 1988; Levitt and Longstreet 1993).

- **The Common Good**. Citizens, in order to be effective, need to act from respect for the common good; that is, they need to be willing to deliberate about the nature of the public good and how to achieve it. They also need to possess compassion, ethical commitment, social responsibility, and a sense of interdependence among people and between people and their environment. And they need to express their commitment to the common good through their actions, e.g., through voting, volunteerism, serving on juries, petitioning the government for change, etc. (Adler, Luhn, and Philbin 1993; Berman 1990; Brandhorst 1990; Colville and Clarken 1992; Drake 1987; Goodman 1989; Harwood and Hahn 1990; Newmann 1989; Pereira 1995; Pratte 1988).

- **Knowledge**. Effective civic education results in knowledge and understanding of our nation's founding documents, the structure of government, the political process, and the global context in which the U.S. functions (Angell 1990; Colville and Clarken 1992; Hyland 1985; Mullins 1990; Boyer 1990).

- **Thinking skills**. Competent citizens require skills in higher-level thinking processes—critical reasoning, problem solving, decision making, perspective-taking, divergent thinking—constructing hypotheses, and evaluating evidence (Berman 1990; Colville and Clarken 1992; Callan 1994; Mullins 1990; Harwood 1990).

- **Social process skills**. Social skills identified as critical for high-functioning citizens include communication, conflict management, consensus building, and working in cooperative endeavors (Angell 1991; Berman 1990; Fowler 1990).

- **Student attitudes**. Effective civic education influences students in such a way that they believe in the efficacy of

civic participation, are interested in participating, and have a feeling of obligation to participate (Angell 1991; Hoge 1988; Fowler 1990).

Achieving The Goals: Research-Based Practices and Program Content

Researchers and other writers make it clear that our civic education goals cannot be realized via our current civic education practices. They then go on to provide the specificity that is so often lacking in our civic education programs, citing elements that research has linked to positive civic attitudes and high levels of civic knowledge, skills, and participation. These include school and classroom climate factors and instructional practices, as well as specific program content.

School Climate Factors

While recognizing that a school is not and should not be a democracy, many of the researchers identified higher levels of democratic values among students in more democratic school environments. Students who are less authoritarian, more tolerant, and more optimistic about democratic processes are linked with schools that

- Have democratic organizational structures in which principals provide clear direction but grant teachers considerable autonomy (Hepburn 1982; Hoge 1988; Wood 1988)
- Allow student participation in decision making about school and classroom operations that affect them (Beyer 1988; Boyer 1990; Wood 1988; Eveslage 1993).

Drake writes,

> Democratic ideals should be the foundation upon which a school culture is founded...Democracy implies certain ethical principles which should be woven into the fabric of the school culture (105).

Open Classroom Climates

The factor most likely to engender democratic values in students is an open classroom climate—an environment whose signifying features are teacher respect for student ideas and teacher use of democratic leadership behaviors. The beneficial effects of open classroom climates are cited by virtually every researcher and reviewer who looked at the relationship between educational practices and student results (i.e., Angell 1991; Avery, et al. 1992; Goodlad 1986; Hepburn 1982; Harwood 1992; Hoge 1988; Levitt and Longstreet 1993; Ochoa 1991; Pratte 1988; Torney-Purta 1983; Ross and Bondy 1993; Newmann 1989; Harwood and Hahn 1990; Patrick 1991; Mabe 1993; VanSledright and Grant 1994).

Because of the near-unanimous support for open classroom environments, it is worthwhile to identify specific components of this kind of environment, together with researchers' views on why it is so favorable to the development of capable citizens. Angell's review characterizes an open classroom climate as exhibiting

> (a) democratic leadership behavior, (b) [positive] teacher verbal behavior, (c) respect for students, (d) peer interaction, (e) open discussion, (f) student participation, and (g) cooperation (250).

The same review indicates that open classroom climates are positively related to

> (a) political knowledge upon which to base informed judgments; (b) skills—such as effective communication and interpersonal skills—requisite for interaction in a free society; (c) commitment to democratic values; and (d) interest, desire, and a sense of obligation to participate fully in the democratic process (243).

Other researchers and reviewers corroborate Angell's statements. Hepburn, for example, writes,

> The teacher's role is crucial, because the teacher's way of managing the class group sets the climate of self-direction, free exchange of views, egalitarian treatment of peers, and at the same time, maintains order and direction in the group (26).

Harwood (1992) found that open classroom environments were positively related to political interest, trust, and self-efficacy and negatively related to political cynicism. The attributes of an open climate in this research were:

- Frequent opportunities for students to express their opinions
- Teacher respect for student opinions
- Teacher encouragement of perspective taking
- A classroom norm of openly discussing controversial issues
- Teacher presentation of a range of viewpoints on issues under discussion
- Teacher use of divergent questioning
- Use of source materials other than textbooks
- Teacher interest and concern about global issues

And according to Torney-Purta's 1983 review on factors that inculcate civic responsibility in students,

> ...the most positive contribution a teacher could make to the acquisition of democratic values was to create a classroom climate characterized by a process giving students freedom to express their opinions. This was more important than any particular content of curriculum (31).

Active Learning

One of the most trenchant criticisms of existing civic education practice is its tendency to place students in passive learning roles. Researchers and other writers insist that effective citizenship is an active role and, therefore, that preparation for this role must be active as well. Drisko (1993) writes,

> There must be a means for students to apply their knowledge of democracy. Since students learn best by doing, the principles of democracy are best taught in such a way that they can be practiced (105).

In Mullins's 1990 discussion of an ideal civic education curriculum, some specific suggestions for active learning are offered:

> The passive transmission of facts is rejected as an inappropriate method of teaching that should be modified in favor of active approaches to learning. Students are to engage in reading, writing, observing, debating, role play, simulations, and the use of statistical data to develop skills in critical thinking, decision making, and problem solving. Cooperative and collaborative types of learning are also emphasized (4).

Like the support for open classroom settings, the support for active, hands-on learning is nearly universal among researchers and reviewers. Supporting documents include Colville and Clarken (1992); Drake (1987); Finklestein (1988); Hardin (1991); Harwood (1990); Leppard (1993); Mabe (1993); Miller (1985); Morse (1993); Mullins (1990); Naylor (1990); Newmann (1987); Parker (1990); Patrick (1988, 1990); Pereira (1988b); Rowe (1990); Thomas (1984); VanSledright and Grant (1994); White (1989); Wood (1990); and Wraga (1993).

Specific kinds of active learning recommended by these writers include instruction and practice in class discussion, responding to open-ended questions, research (using materials other than texts), writing projects including letter writing, cooperative group projects, brainstorming, role-play, simulations, perspective taking, on-site learning, observation, mock trials, case studies, town meetings, interaction with guest speakers and other resource persons, and community service projects.

Many of those who call for active, hands-on learning also see a need for such learning to include time for reflection about one's experiences and learnings. Community service and other out-of-school projects, in particular, should include opportunities to reflect on what one has seen, done, and learned (Fowler 1990; Morse 1993; Rutter and Newmann 1989).

Critical Thinking

While we can classify critical thinking as a type of active learning, I am giving it special attention here because of the enormous emphasis civic education researchers and experts place on it. The low level of critical

thinking skill revealed by studies of our nation's civic preparedness is one reason for this emphasis. Another is the low incidence of critical thinking instruction and practice in American schools. A third is the link research has established between the teaching of critical thinking skills and high-functioning citizenship. The ability to generate hypotheses, gather and evaluate evidence, see and understand competing positions in a controversy, and remain open-minded enough to change one's view when the evidence warrants are key features of democratic deliberation, now and in times past. Weinstein writes,

> The relationship between rational judgment and political action is so fundamental in the history of thought that it hardly bears mentioning. From Aristotle to Mill rational deliberation and political actions were so tightly linked that appropriate political decisions were seen as impossible in the absence of adequate deliberation (1991, 4).

The documents that support the provision of training and practice in critical thinking skills—which include decision-making and problem-solving skills—include Blankenship (1990); Boyer (1990); Colville and Clarken (1992); Hardin (1991); Harwood and Hahn (1990); Hoge (1988); Mullins (1990); Newmann (1987); Parker, Mueller, and Wendling (1989); Parker, Wendling, and Mueller (1988); Thomas (1984); and Weinstein (1991).

Law-Related Education

"The law is simply too pervasive and too important to neglect—much less ignore—in school-based citizenship programs" (Naylor 1990, 34). The citizenship education research and other literature includes a great deal of support for this emerging component of social studies programs. Law-related education—or LRE for short—is defined as,

> ...those organized learning experiences that provide students and educators with opportunities to develop the knowledge and understanding, skills, attitudes and appreciations necessary to respond effectively to the law and legal issues in our complex and changing society (Study Group on Law-Related Education, quoted in Pereira 1988b, 3).

Sources of law, functions of law, legal processes, legal roles, and legal principles such as justice, equality, authority, freedom, and order, comprise the LRE curriculum.

Effective LRE programs typically involve extensive interaction among students via cooperative learning and other interactive projects, including small group work, mock trials, role-play activities, and simulations. Teachers focus on realistic content and balanced treatment of issues and make use of outside resource persons who work in the legal professions. Effective programs also provide staff development activities to prepare teachers to work with students in this specialized area.

Research findings on the effects of LRE are summarized by Pereira (1988b):

> LRE clearly and indisputably increases students' knowledge of the justice system, government, and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in a constitutional democracy. There is also evidence that LRE contributes to development of skills in civic participation, decision making, and critical thinking (3).

Research has also established a link between LRE program participation and improved attitudes toward the legal system, reduced incidence of delinquency (less association with delinquent peers, less violence, greater likelihood of reporting delinquent behavior), and more positive attitudes toward social studies courses (Colville and Clarken 1992; Hardin 1991; Hoge 1988; Naylor 1990; Pereira 1988b).

Community Service

"Community service efforts build self-esteem and allow students to experience themselves as part of the larger network of people who are helping to create a better world" (Berman 1990, 8). The civic education literature focuses on areas such as developing interest in the public good, contributing to one's community, practicing civic skills, and enhancing self-

regard. Researchers and other writers on the subject of community service programs have identified a link between these programs and outcomes (Berman 1990; Dynneson 1992b; Eveslage 1993; Fowler 1990; Patrick 1991; Pereira 1990; Rutter and Newmann 1989; Wood 1990). For maximum benefit, say these writers, community service projects should

- Address a real need
- Integrate and nurture academic skills
- Provide opportunities for young people to be depended upon
- Allow students to analyze problems, consider and try possible solutions, evaluate results, try again, and reflect on what they have learned
- Encourage collaborative problem solving between student and teacher or other adult
- Give students considerable responsibility for organizing their own projects
- Be flexible, offering in-school projects for students with jobs or family responsibilities
- Produce a tangible product as evidence of accomplishment.

Moreover, write Rutter and Newmann,

> If community service programs are to enhance civic responsibility, they should be structured explicitly to deal directly with issues of student commitment, sense of social responsibility, and political participation. [They] should be designed explicitly to foster social responsibility and commitment rather than only individual development (1989, 59).

Global Education

Although some have claimed that education for U.S. citizenship and education for global citizenship are in conflict, the civic education literature portrays them as intertwined and mutually supportive. Titus (1994) writes,

> ...civic education for global understanding...includes a renewed engagement with and dedication to the civic needs of our nation. It continues to involve "explicit and continuing study of the basic concepts and values underlying our democratic community and constitutional order" in the United States (Butts 1988). "It also incorporates, however, recognition that Americans are residents of a planet that has become a global village. This development requires our civic attention and action on a transnational and transcultural scale" (3).

Those advocating inclusion of the international perspective in our civic education curricula include Avery, et al. (1992); Blankenship (1990); Boyer (1990); Collins (1993); Drake (1987); Goodlad (1986); Harwood (1992); Titus (1994); Tucker (1990); Watts, Matlock, and Short (1988); and Wraga (1993). These scholars point out that separating ourselves from the world context provides a distorted picture of U.S. values and interests and that, in any case, it is no longer an option in this era of growing global interdependence. We need to increase our awareness of the interaction between national and international factors such as

> ...the impact of corporations on global society, the mounting problems associated with population increases, the pressing need to establish worldwide control of pollution, the ever-widening gulf between the "haves" and the "have-nots" of our world; the desirability of having available some form of supranational order or control to assure peace; the whole complex area of foreign policy decision making, the growing role of regional organizations and common markets...(Collins 1993, 26-27).

These are only a few of the global issues that have and will continue to have profound effects on the lives of U.S. citizens. As Collins observes, "in a democratic society, where public opinion heavily affects the continuum of choices available to the country's leaders, a realistic knowledge of the problems facing the world is even more critical" (26).

Specific Content

Most of the above discussion has focused on recommended processes for civic education, including particular instructional practices. In addition to these, the civic education litera-

ture also includes strong advocacy for more complete and incisive treatment of traditional civic education content:

- **American History** (Boyer 1990; Patrick 1987, 1988; Butts 1988; Franzosa 1989). According to Boyer, "...all students [should] study American history...be introduced to political thinkers...learn about the heritage of other cultures as they prepare to take their places in a world of diverse peoples whose destinies have become intertwined" (6).

- **The Constitution and Bill of Rights** (Avery 1988; Butts 1988; Patrick 1987, 1988; Sinatra, Beck, and McKeown 1992). Whether or not they provide a specific law-related education course, teachers should emphasize the applicability of these documents to the common concerns of citizens and integrate their content with facts about the past and current structure and operations of government. High-quality learning materials are available and should be used. Avery strongly advocates referring to specific groups when presenting Constitutional principles such as freedom of expression and assembly, since students so often fail to see the applicability of these principles to individuals and groups with whom they disagree (3).

- **Current Events** (Butts 1988; Dynneson 1992b; Eveslage 1993; Patrick 1991). Student surveys reveal that current events comprise one of their favorite themes in social studies classes. They can learn applications of constitutional principles and increase their global awareness through the study of current events.

- **"Real-World" Issues** (Berman 1990; Blankenship 1990; Craig 1990; Franzosa 1989; Ochoa 1991; Parker 1990; Patrick 1987; Wood 1990). This refers to perennial—and often controversial—social issues and to issues of immediate personal relevance to students. Civic educators recommend making exploration of these issues a larger part of the curriculum. "We should," writes Berman, "listen to and acknowledge [students'] feelings, give them multiple perspectives and ways to apply conflict resolution strategies to depolarize conflicts and promote dialogue, and give them opportunities for involvement and action" (79).

Assessment

Many civic educators, like educators in other fields, are attempting to change the ways that student learning is assessed and reported. Adler, Luhn, and Philbin (1993), Finklestein (1993), Parker (1989, 1990), Rudner (1991), and others are pushing for more authentic, performance-based, integrative assessments for civic education. Parker's guidelines are representative of the move toward improved approaches to assessment:

- Outcomes need to be conceptualized as tasks—relatively clear cases rather than amorphous goals.
- The citizenship tasks should be authentic or genuine; that is, they need to resemble the real-world challenges faced by democratic citizens.
- The tasks need to be standard setting, pointing students toward a high, rich level of knowing while at the same time providing the specificity that tasks convey.
- Students should be asked to perform just a few tasks.
- The tasks should be attempted by all students.
- The tasks should generally involve higher-order thinking—a challenge for which the student has to go beyond the routine use of previously learned information.
- The tasks should be known to students well in advance (1990, 18).

Support for Teachers

"Education for responsible citizenship," writes Butts, "is a part of the job of all educators who influence elementary and secondary students, not only the job of teachers of history, civics, and government" (1993, 331). Recalling that the researchers point to insufficient teacher preparation as one cause of America's inadequate civic education programs, it is important to look at their recommendations for improvement in this area.

Preservice Teachers

Researchers and reviewers have identified needs that they feel should be addressed in

teacher preparation programs. The following recommendations are from the work of Colville and Clarken (1992); Dynneson (1992b); Hardin and Johnson (1991); Levitt and Longstreet (1993); and Stanton (1987):

- Teacher preparation programs should consider requiring more coursework in civic education for future teachers, especially for multiple-subjects students.
- Teacher training institutions should prepare their students to serve as models of social responsibility for students. They should select students who are able to model and teach the sense of social responsibility we wish to engender in our children.
- There is a broader range of approaches to teaching for citizenship than are typically provided to preservice teachers; their academic and professional preparation should be expanded beyond the "centrist" model of civic education.
- Teacher training programs should provide learning experiences designed to help prospective teachers instruct students in citizenship content, skills, and values.
- Prospective teachers should receive instruction that will equip them to provide law-related education courses or units. Teacher training institutions should consider requiring such instruction, either as a course or as integrated into civics and government courses.
- Students in social studies education methods classes and student teaching should have opportunities to review basic constitutional concepts.
- Teacher training institutions should encourage social science faculty to involve themselves in the overall teacher preparation process.
- Teacher training institutions should foster future teachers' capacities for dealing with controversial issues by providing them instruction in valuing, "especially in a complex democracy that has at its very core controversy and compromise" (Levitt and Longstreet, 146).

Inservice Teachers

Recommendations for support and inservice training for teachers are offered by Beyer (1998); Dynneson (1992b); Hardin and Johnson (1991); Mullins (1990); and Torney-Purta (1983):

- Citizenship education needs to become an instructional priority in all schools, regardless of grade level, so that teachers can nurture development of our society's citizenship goals.
- Inservice activities should be provided which familiarize teachers with research on effective teaching for responsible citizenship.
- To implement open classroom climates characterized by active learning, "teachers need administrative support and ample time both for inservice training to implement new teaching strategies and for planning their courses of study" (Mullins, 4).
- Administrators should share the power structure of their schools with their teaching staffs by extending them greater autonomy over their work and including them more fully in decisions about school operations.
- Administrators should assist teachers of law-related education by informing the community of its positive effects and engaging their interest and support.

Obstacles to Change

To improve our civic education programs and results, educators must become familiar with these research-based practices and recommendations. This is only the beginning, however, since there are obstacles other than mere lack of information that impede implementation of new approaches. Ochoa (1991), Parker (1989), Titus (1994), and VanSledright and Grant (1994) have identified barriers that must be overcome if we are to make substantial changes in our approach to education for citizenship:

- Resistance to analysis or criticism of the domestic or international practices of the U.S.
- Resistance to practices other than lecture-memorize-quiz
- Entrenched teacher training practices that perpetuate these teaching/learning methods
- Resistance to teachers sharing power with students
- Resistance to assessment methods other than quantifiable standard achievement texts
- Administrator and school board resistance to giving teachers more influence over curricular content
- Resistance by some students to taking more of the responsibility for their own learning
- School organizational approaches that place a higher value on managing students than on educating them
- The "long-standing difficulty schools have in opening up for sustained study issues that matter deeply to people but on which they disagree" (Parker, 354)
- Regarding global education: "Inertia [and] resistance by some who, alarmed by the term 'global,' may see such efforts as a threat to national unity" (Titus, 4)
- The lack of evaluative criteria for civic education.

Conclusion

As usual, change will not come easily. The researchers and other civic education scholars do, however, make a compelling case for sustained effort to bring about change. They remind us that, without proficient, committed, participating citizens, we cannot preserve our democratic way of life. Moreover, as expressed by Parker in his essay on developing citizenship programs,

> ...democratic citizenship is not only a matter of *preserving* democracy—it is also a matter of *creating* it...the daily labor of democracy, the "grunt-work," involves processes that are always of the moment that is just now unfolding; identifying public problems, deliberating on them without repression or discrimination, safeguarding the opposition, opening the system to the dispossessed, responding to injustice (1990, 17).

No wonder Naylor (1990, 56), as part of his advocacy of active, participatory learning, uses *citizen* as a verb: "If you want to learn to 'citizen'," he says, "you need to do more than read books and take courses."

Key References

Angell, A. V. "Democratic Climates in Elementary Classrooms: A Review of Theory and Research." *Theory and Research in Social Education* 19/3 (Summer 1991): 241-266.

Reviews research on the relationship between classroom climate variables and students' civic dispositions and skills. Desirable outcomes, such as feelings of interest and obligation to participate in democratic processes in society, were found among students whose classrooms were characterized by cooperative activities, opportunities for free expression, respect for diverse viewpoints, and student participation in democratic discussion and decision making.

Avery, P. "Adolescents, Civic Tolerance, and Human Rights." *Social Education* 57/2 (November/December 1988): 534-537.

Follows a brief literature review with the description and results of a study of the civic tolerance of approximately 500 students in grade 9 and 11. Students' tolerance of their most-disliked groups was measured by surveying their willingness to extend to this group the rights and protections defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Tolerance levels depended on the particular rights involved. Offers recommendations based on findings.

Avery, P.; Bird, K.; Johnstone, S.; Sullivan, J. L.; and Thalhammer, K. "Exploring Political Tolerance with Adolescents." *Theory and Research in Social Education* 20/4 (Fall 1992): 386-420.

Follows a literature review with the description of a study that examined the effects of a curriculum on the levels of tolerance of more than 300 ninth graders in three schools. The researchers identified several variables, including exposure to the curriculum, that were significantly related to tolerance. Tolerance was defined as willingness to extend the right of freedom of expression to groups whose beliefs are at odds with one's own beliefs.

Berman, S. "Educating for Social Responsibility." *Educational Leadership* 48/3 (November 1990): 75-80.

Defines "social responsibility" as a personal investment in the well-being of others and of the planet, identifies the knowledge and skills necessary for practicing social responsibility, and suggests ways the knowledge and skills can be imparted in schools and classrooms. Also describes some actual programs aimed at developing social responsibility in participants.

Beyer, L. E. "Can Schools Further Democratic Practices?" *Theory Into Practice* 27/4 (Fall 1988): 262-269.

Draws contrasts between "classic liberal theory," which emphasizes private interests, and true democracy, which focuses on the public good. Discusses the ways that terms like "democracy," which have strong positive connotations for Americans, are sometimes misused by people in power to sway public sentiment toward things that are not at all democratic. Argues that both teachers and students must be allowed to share more fully in the power structure of schools if schooling is to foster a truly democratic society.

Blankenship, G. "Classroom Climate, Global Knowledge, Global Attitudes, Political Attitudes." *Theory and Research in Social Education* 18/4 (Fall 1990): 363-386.

Examines the relationship between "open" classroom environments—those in which students feel free to discuss controversial issues openly—and several civic knowledge and attitude measures. Like previous research, this study found positive relationships (of varying strengths) between open classroom climates and all national and international measures.

Boyer, E. L. "Civic Education for Responsible Citizens." *Educational Leadership* 48/3 (November 1990): 4-7.

Argues that preparing students to assume citizenship responsibilities is one of the main purposes of education, claims that education for citizenship is not adequately addressed in schools, and discusses the elements that should comprise civic education programs.

Butts, R. F. *Democratic Values: What the Schools Should Teach*. Paper presented at the National Conference on the Future of Civic Education, Washington, DC, October 1988 (ED 307 187).

Presents and discusses the democratic ideas and values the author believes should comprise the nation's civic education curriculum. Butts identifies the following twelve core civic values as fundamental to the theory and practice of democratic citizenship: the six obligations of citizenship, including justice, equality, authority, participation, truth, and patriotism; and the six rights of citizenship, including freedom, diversity, privacy, due process, property, and human rights. Butts calls this group of values the "Twelve Tables of Civism."

Butts, R. F. "The Time is Now: To Frame the Civic Foundations of Teacher Education." *Journal of Teacher Education* 44/5 (November/December 1993): 326-334.

Calls attention to the absence of specific civic education content from most of the reform proposals and efforts of the 1980s. Outlines the author's recommended teacher preparation coursework in the content and values of U.S. constitutional democracy. Recommends, in particular, the approach of the CIVITAS program for civic education.

Center for Civic Education. *National Standards for Civics and Government*. Calabasas, CA: Center for Civic Education, 1994.

Specifies what students should know and be able to do in the field of civics and government as they complete the fourth, eighth, and twelfth grades. This U.S. Department of Education-funded document is based upon National Goals 3 and 6, which address knowledge and skills for capable citizenship.

Collins, H. T. "International Education for Tomorrow's Citizens." *The School Administrator* 50/8 (August 1993): 25-30.

Notes that American schools are not currently preparing globally literate citizens, explains why global literacy is important, and offers a series of recommendations for improving American students' understanding of the world beyond U.S. borders.

Colville, J. K., and Clarken, R. H. *Developing Social Responsibility through Law-Related Education*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA, April 1992 (ED 344 870).

Describes and cites research showing the effectiveness of law-related education (LRE) in developing socially responsible citizens by improving the knowledge, attitudes, and behavior of LRE students. LRE courses aim at developing both content knowledge and abilities such as clear reasoning, critical thinking, empathy, reflection, and decision making. LRE also requires in-depth teacher preparation in the principles and laws on which American society is based.

Drake, C. "Educating for Responsible Global Citizenship." *Journal of Geography* 86/6 (November/December 1987): 300-306.

Describes an array of pressing international problems—widespread poverty, overpopulation, human rights abuses, environmental pollution, and so on—discusses the interrelatedness of the world's nations; and makes recommendations for actions U.S. citizens can take to address current world problems. Contact information is provided for many agencies and organizations concerned with global issues.

Drisko, J. "The Responsibilities of Schools in Civic Education." *Journal of Education* 175/1 (1993): 105-119.

Identifies three elements that schools must provide as part of high-quality civic education: (1) a curriculum based on the fundamental principals of democracy as put forth in the nation's founding documents, (2) a school culture that is based on principles of democracy, and (3) opportunities for students to apply their knowledge of democracy.

Dynneson, T. L. "What's Hot and What's Not in Effective Citizenship Instruction." *The Social Studies* 83/5 (September/October 1992): 197-200.

Reports the results of a survey of high school seniors undertaken to identify their attitudes towards different kinds of citizenship-related activities. Among the findings were that students were most interested in current events and activities pertaining to their personal interests and needs. Makes recommendations based on findings.

Eveslage, T. E. "The Social Studies and Scholastic Journalism: Partners in Citizenship Education." *Social Education* 57/2 (February 1993): 82-86.

Provides a review of the literature on the inadequacy of citizenship education in the U.S., with a focus on the instructional, resource, and curriculum practices that perpetuate this inadequacy. Advocates integrating the social studies curriculum with school journalism in order to provide in-depth, hands-on experiences of values, rights, and responsibilities associated with citizenship.

Finkelstein, J. M.; Nielsen, L. E.; and Switzer, T. "Primary Elementary Social Studies Instruction: A Status Report." *Social Education* 57/2 (February 1993): 64-69.

Discusses research on the ways young children learn and the kinds of teaching

approaches that are congruent with those needs. Then reports the results of a survey of more than 1200 primary-level teachers on their preferred and actual approach to teaching social studies. Teaching practices were found to be seriously at odds with the recommendations of early childhood specialists. Recommendations are offered.

Fowler, D. "Democracy's Next Generation." *Educational Leadership* 48/3 (November 1990): 10-15.

Reveals results of a survey of over 1,000 15-24 year-olds and social studies teachers about their views of citizenship and citizenship education, and makes recommendations based on findings. Following findings about young people's detachment from public life, the discussion focuses on hands-on curriculum, community service, and voter registration as key elements in developing actively participating citizens.

Franzosa, S. D. "Teaching Citizenship." *Magazine of History* 4/2 (Spring 1989): 5-6.

Bemoans the lack of knowledge and understanding exhibited by contemporary high school students regarding the nature, rights, and responsibilities of citizenship. Discusses the changes that should be made in the American history curriculum in order to engage the interest of students and overcome their apathy and cynicism.

Goodlad, J. I. "The Learner At the World's Center." *Social Education* 50/6 (October 1986): 424-436.

Reviews historical forces leading to today's social, economic, and educational needs and proposes ways to meet these needs. Emphasizes the need for today's students to develop global awareness and understanding; engage in active, contextualized learning and development of higher-order mental activities; and have equal access to knowledge and tools for dealing with the complexities of the contemporary world.

Hardin, J. P., and Johnson, G. *Teachers Speak Out on Law-Related Education. Summary Report on the SPICE IV National Teachers' Survey*. Winston-Salem, NC: Center for Research and Development in Law-Related Education, 1991 (ED 371 967).

Reports results of a survey of 1,284 teachers of grades K-12 regarding the kinds of support they need for teaching law-related and citizenship education. Also reports positive effects of law-related/citizenship education on student achievement, attitudes, behavior, class participation levels, and critical thinking skills.

Harwood, A. M. "Classroom Climate and Civic Education in Secondary Social Studies Research: Antecedents and Findings." *Theory and Research in Social Education* 20/1 (Winter 1992): 47-86.

Reviews research from the 1960s-forward that investigated the relationships between climate measures in social studies classrooms and student attitudes toward the political process. In general, "open" classroom environments featuring student participation and free expression have a positive effect on student attitudes toward politics. Some—but less—evidence indicates that open classroom climates also positively impact political knowledge and political participation.

Harwood, A. M. *The Effects of Close Up Participation on High School Students' Political Attitudes*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Boston, MA, April 1990 (ED 320 846).

Compares the attitudes of Georgia secondary students who participated in a week-long, intensive, on-site, experiential citizenship education program in Washington, DC, with those of similar students who participated in a citizenship education program at their home schools. Experiential program students exhibited more positive change from pre- to post-test in both political attitudes and political participation than did control students.

Harwood, A. M., and Hahn, C. L. *Controversial Issues in the Classroom*. ERIC Digest. Bloomington, IN: ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education, September 1990 (ED 327 453).

Proceeds from the assumption that "the essence of healthy democracy is open dialogue about issues of public concern," and identifies research findings about effective approaches for holding classroom discussions on controversial issues.

Hastings, W. L. "Political Socialization Themes in the Post-Watergate Era." *Social Education* 50/6 (October 1986): 453-457.

Compares the survey responses of three populations toward democracy and government "to discover whether... democratic values have changed since 1968." Students who were in grade 12 in 1968, 1972, and 1984 completed the same attitude instrument. Results showed increased cynicism over time in all subject areas investigated—the social role of government, law and legal procedures, minority rights, and political participation. The author credits this trend to events such as Watergate and the deficit increase of the Reagan years, which he feels have eroded the confidence of young adults.

Hepburn, M. A. *Democratic Schooling and Citizenship Education: What Does the Research Reveal?* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Social Science Education Consortium, East Lansing, MI, June 1982 (ED 014 109).

Examines four major research studies comparing democratically operated classrooms and schools with more autocratic or anarchistic ones. Democratic settings were characterized by encouragement of student self-expression and self-monitoring; opportunities for students to influence activities; fairness in disciplinary and reward structures; and cooperative efforts by administrators, teachers, and students. By comparison with other kinds of settings, the more democratically operated schools and classrooms exhibited less violence, fewer crimes, better student attitudes and self-control, more student time on task, and more positive student political attitudes.

Hoge, J. D. *Civic Education in Schools.* ERIC Digest. Bloomington, IN: ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education, December 1988 (ED 301 531).

Defines and describes civic education as it is currently conducted in the U.S.; discusses the inadequacy of most civic education for preparing knowledgeable and participating citizens; and cites research findings on effective practices which, if more widely used, could improve the quality of civic education.

Hyland, J. T. *Teaching About the Constitution: Relationships between Teachers' Subject Matter Knowledge, Pedagogic Beliefs and Instructional Decision Making Regarding Selection of Content, Materials, and Activities: Summary of Research Findings.* Los Angeles, CA: Los Angeles Unified School District, 1985 (ED 273 557).

Reports results of an observational study of junior high school teachers as they taught eighth graders about the U.S. Constitution. Researchers found the teachers' knowledge about the Constitution very limited, their beliefs about teaching repressive, their attitudes toward students demeaning, and their instructional methods inadequate for giving students anything beyond the most superficial knowledge about "the supreme law of our land."

Kickbusch, K. W. "Civic Education and Preservice Educators: Extending the Boundaries of Discourse." *Theory and Research in Social Education* 25/3 (Summer 1987): 173-188.

Reports on a study in which seven student teachers in social studies classrooms were observed and interviewed to learn about their teaching goals and strategies. Subjects had a narrow range of pedagogical skills and kept to the "centrist" position on civic education, an approach characterized by passive learning and recitation of facts. The authors call for teacher preparation programs to educate aspiring teachers in a broader range of civics content and a wider array of teaching skills.

Leppard, L. J. "Discovering a Democratic Tradition and Educating for Public Politics." *Social Education* 57/1 (January 1993): 23-26.

Argues that meaningful participation in politics requires active involvement in

study, deliberation, and interaction with others—not merely being fed information and invited to choose between prepackaged options. Indicates that the social studies approach called National Issues Forums in the Classroom provides a structure for meaningful involvement by helping students to learn about issues and discuss their meaning, importance, and potential solutions and to achieve consensus with others.

Levitt, G. A., and Longstreet, W. S. "Controversy and the Teaching of Authentic Civic Values." *The Social Studies* 84/4 (July/August 1993): 142-148.

Argues that discussion of controversial matters in classrooms is essential to developing authentic civic values in students. Since this is itself a controversial matter, the authors offer recommendations for preservice teacher education and guidelines to help teachers pursue more candid classroom discussions without alienating their communities or jeopardizing their jobs. Includes two model lesson outlines and a listing of resource agencies.

Mabe, A. R. "Moral and Practical Foundations for Civic Education." *The Social Studies* 84/4 (July/August 1993): 153-157.

Argues that civic education must include moral education of a secular kind in order to develop the kinds of citizens we want. The author regards theories of social justice, the practice of democratic principles in schools and classrooms, and community-based experiences as essential components of a civic/moral education program.

Morse, S. W. "The Practice of Citizenship: Learn by Doing." *The Social Studies* 84/4 (July/August 1993): 164-167.

Identifies the kinds of school- and community-based activities students can pursue in order to gain practice in the knowledge and skills of citizenship. Recommends democratically run classrooms and community service participation as means by which students can build and practice citizenship skills.

Mullins, S. L. *Social Studies for the 21st Century: Recommendations of the National Commission on Social Studies in the Schools*. ERIC Digest. Bloomington, IN: ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/ Social Science Education, November 1990 (ED 329 484).

Summarizes the recommendations made by the National Commission on Social Studies in the Schools for curriculum content and teaching strategies to be used with each age group, K-12. Key recommendations include that students should develop citizenship skills as well as knowledge via active learning approaches in reading, writing, observing, debating, role play, simulations, use of statistics, decision making, and problem solving.

Naylor, D. T. "Educating for Citizenship: LRE and the Social Studies." *Update on Law-Related Education* 14/2 (Spring 1990): 33-36, 56.

Asserts that law-related education (LRE) needs to be thoroughly integrated into social studies programs at the elementary and secondary levels, rather than being relegated to a "special event" or high school elective course. Identifies suitable points in the typical social studies curriculum for inclusion of LRE activities.

Newmann, F. M. *Citizenship Education in the United States: A Statement of Needs*. Paper presented at the National Conference on Civic Renewal, Boston, MA, November 1987 (ED 307 203).

Identifies reasons for the failure of reform efforts in citizenship education, despite widespread agreement that reform is needed. Specifies issues that reformers should address and calls for teacher involvement in reform efforts. Insists on instruction that includes direct student experience with citizenship functions and issues.

Newmann, F. M. "Reflective Civic Participation." *Social Education* 53/6 (October 1989): 357-360, 366.

Argues that programs designed to foster civic participation in students must also include opportunities for them to reflect

about participation. Describes the kinds of issues that emerge when people engage in community participation and suggests ways that educators can help students to deal with these issues.

Ochoa, A. *Informed and Reasoning Citizens: An Interdisciplinary Matter*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Washington, DC, April 1991 (ED 338 519).

Argues that the preparation of informed and thoughtful citizens requires two qualities not commonly present in school social studies programs: (1) true integration of history, political science, geography, and other disciplines and (2) instructional approaches that build students' skills in raising questions, gathering and evaluating evidence, identifying assumptions, challenging arguments, defending positions, and so on, rather than passively receiving lectures. Barriers to the implementation of such changes are identified.

Parker, W. C. "Assessing Citizenship." *Educational Leadership* 48/3 (November 1990): 17-22.

Discusses the need for sound planning for citizenship education within the social studies curriculum. Identifies guidelines for developing effective citizenship education and assessments and cites specific examples of units for different grade levels that can help schools meet their learning goals for students.

Parker, W. C. "Participatory Citizenship: Civics in the Strong Sense." *Social Education* 53/6 (October 1989): 353-354.

Identifies and describes the components of a strong civics program, including relevant knowledge, an environment that encourages students to think and act on behalf of the public good, and participation through sustained dialogue about issues of public importance. Also identifies obstacles to implementing these elements.

Parker, W. C. "Why Ethics in Citizenship Education?" *Social Studies and the Young Learner* 1/1 (September/October 1988): 3-5.

Asserts that citizenship education should consciously and deliberately include instruction and practice in ethics and values. Three reasons are offered and argued: that it is impossible *not* to transmit values in education; that the effective functioning of a democracy demands ethically grounded citizens; and that our social, relational lives are healthier and happier when guided by ethical principles such as caring and compassion.

Parker, W. C.; Mueller, M.; and Wendling, L. "Critical Reasoning on Civic Issues." *Theory and Research in Social Education* 27/1 (Winter 1989): 7-32.

Reports results of a study of the critical reasoning skills of 24 senior high school students as expressed in four-paragraph essays they were asked to develop following a specific format. Their simplistic arguments and poorly constructed counter-arguments indicated a need for instruction in dialectical reasoning on civic issues. See Parker, Wendling, and Mueller (1988) below.

Parker, W. C.; Wendling, L.; and Mueller, M. *Critical Thinking and Curriculum Design in the Civic Domain*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA, April 1988 (ED 295 992).

Discusses the effect on thinking critically and expressing ideas produced by student participation in a one-month residential citizen leadership institute during the summer preceding their senior year. Intensive analysis, discussion and writing about civic problems from the local to the global level led to dramatic improvements in students' ability to prepare a cogent essay exhibiting complex dialectical reasoning. Implications for curriculum design are drawn. See previous entry.

Patrick, J. J. *Education on the U.S. Constitution*. ERIC Digest. Bloomington, IN: ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/ Social Science Education, May 1987 (ED 285 801).

Provides a digest of information on the way the U.S. Constitution is taught in the public schools, citizens' levels of knowl-

edge about the Constitution, problems of insufficient knowledge and understanding, and recommendations for improvements in teaching about the Constitution.

Patrick, J. J. *Teaching the Bill of Rights*. ERIC Digest. Bloomington, IN: ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education, October 1988 (ED 298 076).

Summarizes research on the manner in which the Bill of Rights is taught in schools, the deficiencies in students' and adults' knowledge concerning the Bill of Rights and issues to which it pertains, and approaches to teaching that could be expected to improve students' knowledge and understanding of this important document.

Patrick, J. J. *Teaching the Responsibilities of Citizenship*. ERIC Digest. Bloomington, IN: Clearinghouse for Social Studies/ Social Science Education, April 1991 (ED 332 929).

Summarizes literature on the importance of learning citizenship responsibilities, the deficiencies in students' learning in this area, and actions the home and the school can take to improve students' preparation for assuming the responsibilities of citizenship.

Pereira, C. *Law-Related Education in Elementary and Secondary Schools*. ERIC Digest. Bloomington, IN: Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education, 1988 (ED 296 948).

Defines law-related education (LRE), describes its role in the social studies curriculum, cites research findings on effective LRE practices, and recommends staff development practices to equip teachers to operate successful LRE programs.

Pratte, R. "Civic Education in a Democracy." *Theory Into Practice* 27/4 (Fall 1988): 303-312.

Describes problems with civic education as it is usually practiced in the schools and suggests an alternative approach. Contends that teachers should focus on the moral significance of all school subject matter as they teach so that students will acquire both the disposition and the habit of acting for the public good.

Rowe, J. W. "To Develop Thinking Citizens." *Educational Leadership* 48/3 (November 1990): 43-44.

Describes elementary school social studies students' use of a simulated town meeting to address actual issues faced by their community. Review and discussion of issues called for development of content knowledge plus skills in critical thinking, decision making, problem solving, research, communication and cooperation.

Rudner, L. M. *Assessing Civics Education*. ERIC Digest. Washington, DC: ERIC Clearinghouse on Tests, Measurement, and Evaluation, May 1991 (ED 338 698).

Provides general guidelines for those who will be assessing the civics learning of elementary and secondary students. Also identifies a variety of techniques that can produce more meaningful and accurate data than multiple-choice or true-false tests, including group projects, interviews, essay questions, informal observation, formal observation, and individual student projects.

Rutter, R. A., and Newmann, F. M. "The Potential of Community Service to Enhance Civic Responsibility." *Social Education* 53/6 (October 1989): 371-374.

Discusses findings from a study of the nature and outcomes of community service programs. Since participants exhibited growth in personal development but not on several measures of civic responsibility, the researchers recommend that community service programs be specifically designed to foster civic responsibility in participants.

Sinatra, G. M.; Beck, I. L.; and McKeown, M. G. "A Longitudinal Characterization of Young Students' Knowledge of Their Country's Government." *American Educational Research Journal* 29/3 (Fall 1992): 633-661.

Examines the effect of fifth and eighth grade social studies instruction on students' understanding of the U.S. government, particularly the notion of citizen representation. Students were interviewed on four occasions over a three-year period, giving responses that were characterized by sameness rather than growth and focused on the structure of government rather than its historical or philosophical underpinnings.

Stanton, G. E. "The Civic Education Background of Future Teachers." *Social Studies Review* 26/3 (Spring 1987): 36-46.

Presents findings from a study of the civic education knowledge of 425 college students in teacher preparation programs in California. Findings indicate that most teachers-in-training, particularly those preparing to become elementary teachers, had a very limited grasp of civic education concepts. Recommendations are offered for improving the preparation of preservice teachers.

Thomas, G. R. "Commitment and Action: New Directions in Citizenship Education Research." *History and Social Science Teacher* 19/4 (May 1984): 238-239.

Reviews literature on the relationship between student participation in social studies classes and commitment to civic activism. Concludes that most students are passive learners in the classroom and passive citizens outside of school. Suggests approaches to teaching social studies which can help students become questioning, critical learners and active citizens.

Titus, C. *Civic Education for Global Understanding*. ERIC Digest. Bloomington, IN: ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/ Social Science Education, April 1994 (ED 370 882).

Draws from the work of contemporary social studies and social science program developers to identify the civic education content these experts recommend. Calls for a shift to curricula that emphasize both U.S. history and government and acquaint students with the contemporary international context. Identifies proposed curriculum and instructional changes and barriers faced by those who support changes.

Torney-Purta, J. "Psychological Perspectives on Enhancing Civic Education Through the Education of Teachers." *Journal of Teacher Education* 34/6 (November/ December 1983): 30-34.

Reviews research on relationships between classroom climate and students' grasp of and interest in citizenship in a democracy. Makes research-based recommendations for teacher education activities that enhance teachers' abilities to foster civic concern and participation in their students.

Tucker, J. L. *Citizenship Education through the Eyes of Elementary School Principals*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Social Science Education Consortium, Palo Alto, CA, June 1986 (ED 275 574).

Investigates the priorities placed by elementary principals in Florida on four dimensions of citizenship education—moral and ethical, interpersonal understandings, enculturation, and citizenship participation. Principals assigned a low priority to enculturation and citizenship participation and seemed largely unaware that citizenship education is a major focus of the social studies curriculum.

Tucker, J. L. *Global Change and American Citizenship Education: The Vital Role of History*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Social Science Education Consortium, Evanston, IL, June 1990 (ED 337 404).

Argues that citizenship education should be linked with international education to familiarize students with the global context in which the actions of the U.S. take place. Claims that history instruction, too, should include the international events and influences so often lacking from discussions of America's history. Identifies reasons that awareness of global contexts is becoming more important than ever before, and quotes many individuals and associations who are calling for increased international focus.

VanSledright, B. A., and Grant, S. F. "Citizenship Education and the Persistent Nature of Classroom Teaching Dilemmas." *Theory and Research in Social Education* 22/3 (Summer 1994): 305-339.

Examines the citizenship education beliefs and teaching behaviors of three elementary teachers in relation to Cornbleth's description of citizenship education as "illusory," "technical" or "constructive." Concludes that the active, self-directed, democratic approach termed "constructive" is difficult to achieve in classrooms, because democratic functioning is at odds with school goals and because curricular content is determined by administrators, school boards, and others outside the classroom.

Wade, R. C., and Everett, S. "Civic Participation in Third Grade Social Studies Textbooks." *Social Education* 55/8 (September 1994): 308-311.

Discusses findings from a review of four texts for third graders to (1) identify the kinds of civic participation mentioned, (2) compare them with portrayals in texts from the 1960s and 1970s, and (3) determine whether civic participation options for children were presented. In general, the contemporary texts presented a more active, involved portrayal of citizenship than the older texts, and children in community service activities were portrayed.

Weinstein, M. *Critical Thinking and Education for Democracy*. Resource Publication Series 4, No. 2. Upper Montclair, NJ: Montclair State College; New Jersey Institute for Critical Thinking, 1991 (ED 363573).

Argues that instruction and practice in critical thinking is excellent preparation for students as they take on the responsibilities of citizenship. Theories of critical thinking experts are invoked to illustrate the suitability of critical thinking models for developing the capacity for "rational deliberation" that is needed for capable citizenship.

Wood, G. H. "The Hope for Civic Education." *Theory Into Practice* 27/4 (Fall 1988): 296-302.

Refutes the widely held notions that the main purpose of public education is to prepare young people for the workforce and that business and industrial problems are largely the fault of the schools. Argues that education's major purpose is to prepare citizens to participate actively in a democracy. Briefly describes projects that give both teachers and students practice in participatory citizenship.

Wood, G. H. "Teaching for Democracy." *Educational Leadership* 48/3 (November 1990): 32-37.

Describes commonalities among several urban, suburban, and rural schools around the U. S. that give students a sense of community and direct experience as participating citizens. Elements include (1) small home groups or "advisories" where students can share with an adult advisor and other students, and receive academic and personal support, (2) student groups that stay with the same teacher for more than one year, (3) multiage grouping, (4) cooperative learning, (5) hands-on lessons for active learning, (6) learning activities that are relevant to students' lives, and (7) contributions to the larger community through service projects.

General References

Adler, S. A.; Luhn, C. A.; and Philbin, J. "Participatory Citizenship: Made and Remade for Each Generation." *International Journal of Social Education* 8/1 (Spring 1993): 67-74.

Provides a critique of the treatment of citizenship education in *America 2000*, arguing that references to citizenship education are without substance and pointing out that social studies as a discipline is not even mentioned. The authors also claim that traditional testing practices do not assess the kinds of higher-level reasoning good social studies instruction seeks to impart.

Avery, P.; Hoffman, D.; Sullivan, J.; Bird, K.; Johnstone, S.; Thalhammer, K.; Fried, A.; and Theiss-Morse, B. *Tolerance for Diversity of Beliefs: A Secondary Curriculum Unit*. Boulder, CO: Social Science Education Consortium, Inc., 1993 (ED 365 595).

Responds to the lack of in-depth examination of key constitutional issues in current curricula by offering a six-week, eight-lesson curriculum focusing on tolerance and intolerance as political concepts and as historical phenomena. The curriculum is based on the authors' conviction that "tolerance for diverse beliefs is critical to a democracy...and an important area of inquiry within citizenship education," but no particular "right answers" are advocated. Learning activities include case studies, role playing, simulations, mock interviews, and journal keeping.

Barth, J. L. "*America 2000* Goal 3: A Reactionary Reform of Citizenship Education." *International Journal of Social Education* 8/1 (Spring 1993): 59-66.

Offers a critique of the narrow conception of citizenship education presented in Goal 3, claiming that political rather than educational considerations have driven the goal development process. Argues for a return to a broader conception of social studies and citizenship education and encourages social studies teachers to join him in working toward this change.

Brandhorst, A. R. "Teaching Twenty-First Century Citizenship: Social Psychological Foundations." *Theory and Research in Social Education* 18/2 (Spring 1990): 157-168.

Claims that America's "economic model of human decision making," which holds that what is good for the individual is good for the group, has led to serious, worldwide social dilemmas and needs to be replaced by a "justice-based model" that focuses on the well-being of the group. Likewise claims that the American focus on "primary control" (control of others and the physical world) needs to be tempered with "secondary control" (control of self). Indicates that social studies curricula should be changed so as to encourage self-restraint and concern for group welfare.

Callan, E. "Beyond Sentimental Civic Education." *The American Journal of Education* 102 (February 1994): 190-221.

Describes two extreme points of view toward politics and government—a blind, uncritical patriotism that the author views as "sentimental," and a hypercritical outlook that leads to cynicism and apathy. Offers a third position—a conception of political virtue that allows for both critical thinking and patriotic feeling.

Congress of the United States. *Goals 2000: Educate America Act*. HR 1804. Washington, DC: Congress of the United States, January 25, 1994.

Identifies and describes national goals in eight areas to be achieved by the year 2000, as ratified by Congress in 1994. The areas addressed include school readiness; school completion; student achievement and citizenship; teacher education and professional development; mathematics and science; adult literacy and lifelong learning; safe, disciplined, and alcohol- and drug-free schools; and parental participation.

Craig, E. "Want to Teach Social Responsibility? Start With Political Philosophy." *Educational Leadership* 48/3 (November 1990): 87-88.

Describes the *We the People...* program developed by the Center for Civic Education in Calabasas, California. Offering activities for both elementary and secondary levels, the program engages students in examining concepts such as "civic virtue" and "common welfare" by linking them with students' own life experiences. Participation in activities such as simulated congressional hearings gives students firsthand experience with the workings of government.

Dynneson, T. L. "What Does Good Citizenship Mean to Students?" *Social Education* 56/1 (January 1992): 55-58.

Reports results from two studies undertaken to determine what qualities high

school seniors believe to comprise good citizenship. From surveys completed by more than 700 subjects, researchers identified and rank ordered ten characteristics. Among the findings—"ability to make wise decisions" and "concern for welfare of others" were the highest-ranked citizenship attributes.

Finkelstein, B. "Rescuing Civic Learning: Some Prescriptions for the 1990s." *Theory Into Practice* 27/4 (Fall 1988): 250-255.

Describes the approaches taken by different reformers to improve civic education. Uses similarities noted across the work of these reformers as the basis for a vision of civic education that incorporates the intellectual and moral elements the author believes have been lost.

Golden, K. "The Relationship Between Voting Knowledge and Voting Attitudes of Selected Ninth and Tenth Grade Students." *Social Studies Journal* 14 (Spring 1985): 10-15.

Discusses a study conducted by the author, a high school social studies teacher, to determine whether improvements in student knowledge about voting would increase their sense of the importance of voting. The author concludes that attitudes improved, but, unfortunately, she gives little information about the treatment, instruments, or other features of the study.

Goodman, J. "Education for Critical Democracy." *Journal of Education* 171/2 (1989): 88-116.

Draws upon the work of John Dewey to argue for a "connectionist" view of democracy. Whereas democracy is generally taught primarily as a form of government, Goodman claims that education should teach democracy as a mode of living with one's fellows. Argues that there is too much focus on individualism in schools and in society and that the teaching of democracy should therefore focus primarily on community and the public good.

Hodgkinson, H. *The Context of 21st-Century Civics and Citizenship*. Paper presented at the National Conference on the Future of Civic Education, Washington, DC, October 1988 (ED 310 984).

Projects U.S. demographic trends to provide a profile of the future U.S. population, with special focus on the school population for whom educators must begin planning. Shortly after the year 2000, (1) nearly half of all students will be ethnic minorities; (2) the school population will be characterized by poverty, cultural and language diversity, and physical and emotional handicaps; and (3) education is likely to compete with society's growing population of senior citizens for resources. The author calls for serving all children, saying "we need them all to do well."

Houston, J. E. (ed.). *Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors*. 12th Edition. Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press, 1990.

Lays out the indexing system of the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), including "scope notes"—definitions of educational terms based on the way these terms are used across thousands of educational documents.

Miller, J. D. *Effective Participation: A Standard for Social Science Education*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Social Science Education Consortium, Racine, WI, June 1985 (ED 265 083).

Investigates the relationship between taking secondary social studies courses and levels of political participation following high school. Data from two large-scale studies were used. Neither numbers nor kinds of social studies classes correlated with later political participation. What were found to correlate positively with postsecondary political participation were (1) involvement in a strong academic program and (2) involvement in extracurricular activities—two variables also positively related to high-SES. Thus, social studies coursework by lower and middle SES did not interrupt "the upper SES domination of the political process."

Parker, W. C. "Curriculum for Democracy." In *Democracy, Education, and the*

Schools, edited by R. Soder. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996, 182-210.

Discusses the inadequacy of the public school civics curriculum to educate knowledgeable, practicing democrats. Recommends an approach to curriculum development that observes the key principles of "teaching the aim," knowledge-in-use (or situated knowledge), face-to-face discussion, reflective citizen action, diverse perspectives, democratic values, and multiple associations with other in which issues of living and working in groups are addressed. Notes that "Problems of Democracy" curricula have already incorporated some of these principles and can be built upon by contemporary curriculum developers.

Pereira, C. *Educating ESL Students for Citizenship in a Democratic Society*. ERIC Digest. Bloomington, IN: ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education, November 1993 (ED 337 138).

Draws from a variety of ESL and social studies sources to develop recommendations for programs to build the citizenship knowledge and skills of immigrant students. Major recommendations include professional development activities for both ESL and social studies teachers working with non-native speakers and the use of cooperative learning strategies for building both language and citizenship skills.

Pereira, C. "Educating for Citizenship in the Elementary Grades." *Phi Delta Kappan* 69/6 (February 1988): 429-431.

Describes the *Educating for Citizenship* program, which involves students in grades K-4 in hands-on activities designed to develop an understanding of rights, responsibilities, and approaches to governance in a democracy. Featuring class discussion, brainstorming, role play, elections, divergent questions, decision making and problem solving, the program has been highly successful in building citizenship skills in the more than 50 Maryland schools that use it.

Pereira, C. Personal communication. November 1995.

Argues, in her response to a review draft of this paper, that examples of acting on behalf of the common good should be provided, e.g., volunteerism, voting, serving on juries, and petitioning the government as an avenue to change.

Pereira, C.; Dolenga, J.; and Rolzinski, C. A. "Teaching Citizenship Through Community Service." *Social Studies and the Young Learner* 3/2 (November/December 1990): 1-4.

Explains the ways in which community service experiences build citizenship awareness and skills in students, identifies and describes suitable places in the school curriculum for community service projects, and cites the attributes of a quality community service program.

Petrini, G. C., and Fleming, D. B. "A History of Social Studies Skills." *Theory and Research in Social Education* 18/3 (Summer 1990): 233-247.

Traces the history of social studies education in the U.S. to identify what were considered to be social studies skills during different periods in the past. Citizenship, inquiry, study, and thinking skills appear in various combinations at different time periods. No definitive, agreed-upon list of social studies skills has ever emerged.

Ross, D. D., and Bondy, E. "Classroom Management for Responsible Citizenship: Practical Strategies for Teachers." *Social Education* 57/6 (October 1993): 326-328.

Argues that, while the research on effective classroom management techniques is valuable and useful, application of these techniques alone does not help students to become responsible citizens. Offers a series of recommendations that combine classroom management research findings with approaches for fostering responsible citizenship.

Sidelnick, D. J. "Effects of Ability, Grade, and Gender on Three Measures of Citizenship with High School Students." *The Social Studies* 80/3 (May/June 1989): 92-97.

Examines the relationships between characteristics of ninth and twelfth grade survey respondents and the citizenship variables of respect for law, attitude toward others' opinions and beliefs, and freedoms as guaranteed by the Bill of Rights. The most notable finding was that the views of low-ability students were considerably more dogmatic and less democratic than those of other students. The author makes curriculum recommendations based on findings.

Sleeper, M.; Strom, M. S.; and Zabierek, H. C. "Facing History and Ourselves." *Educational Leadership* 48/3 (November 1990): 84-86.

Describes the program, Facing History and Ourselves, in which junior and senior high school students study events surrounding the Holocaust and apply the lessons of those historical events to actual and potential events in their own lives. They learn that "evil and injustice begin with small steps of conforming, accepting, and not thinking about what is happening."

Tworek, R. J. *The Effectiveness of Videotape Recordings in Teaching on the Achievement of Ninth Grade Students in Citizenship Classes.* Atlanta, GA: Georgia State University, 1992 (ED 346 833).

Compares the examination scores of ninth graders who viewed three videotapes as part of a unit on taxes in American history with the scores of students who studied the same material without viewing the videotapes. There was no statistically significant difference between the test scores of the groups.

Warren, D. "Original Intents: Public Schools as Civic Education." *Theory Into Practice* 27/4 (Fall 1988): 243-249.

Traces the history of education in the U.S., focusing on the evolution of attitudes about the role of the school in preparing people to function in citizenship roles. Claims that the ambivalence people express today about the civic role of education has roots in the recurring conflicts that have occurred throughout the nation's history.

Watts, W. D.; Matlock, D. T.; and Short, A. *Patterns of Social Fragmentation and Cohesion: The Social Context of 21st Century Education for Citizenship.* Paper presented at the National Conference on the Future of Civic Education, Washington, DC, October 1988 (ED 307 194).

Calls attention to the economic, demographic, political, and social forces that are shaping the modern world and argues that civic education needs to include awareness of these forces and strategies for dealing with the issues they raise. Calls for civic education that includes global awareness, acceptance and celebration of cultural differences, and activities to "rebuild the lost sense of community."

White, C. S. "Information Technology and Representative Government: Educating an Informed and Participative Citizenry." *Journal of Social Studies Research* 13/1 (Winter 1989): 8-14.

Discusses the potential of technology for helping citizens to become more informed and involved in the democratic process. Identifies which effects on citizen knowledge and participation are truly possible and reasonable to expect and which are unlikely to occur. Recommends activities that are more likely to arouse citizen interest in social and political issues than merely making information technology available on a large scale.

Wolf, A. "The Fate of Teaching Constitutional Principles to Middle School Students." *Social Studies Review* 30/1 (Fall 1990): 15-26.

Presents and documents three issues: that the Constitutional rights of public school students in California (and elsewhere, speculates the author) are frequently ignored; that California students frequently are not taught about the Constitution and Bill of Rights until grades 11 or 12, in violation of state guidelines; and that many California teachers are teaching social studies without a credential in the subject area and/or perform poorly on a 10-item multiple choice test about Constitutional principles.

Womack, S. T., and King, O. R. *A Case for Citizenship Education in the Early Years*. Durant, OK: Southeastern Oklahoma State University; Huntsville, TX: Sam Houston State University, March 1982 (ED 220357).

Reports results of a survey of students in grades 5, 8, and 11 regarding their attitudes toward eight societal components related to citizenship: country, state, neighborhood, voluntary membership organizations, religious organizations, school, home, and self. Since attitudes were already established by grade 5, the authors recommend beginning citizenship education early in children's school experience.

Wraga, W. G. "The Interdisciplinary Imperative for Citizenship Education." *Theory and Research in Social Education* 21/3 (Summer 1993): 201-231.

Argues that only well-designed interdisciplinary programming will equip young people with the knowledge and skills necessary to function effectively as citizens. Briefly describes an interdisciplinary program for citizenship education and identifies teacher preparation and other requirements for its implementation.

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SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT RESEARCH SERIES
"Research You Can Use"

Close-Up #20

School Size, School Climate, and Student Performance

Kathleen Cotton

If restructuring truly is an aim of school reform, then the scale of schooling is a major structural issue.
—Craig Howley, 1994

Is it possible to get people to pay attention to the virtues of smallness as well as the virtues of scale?
—Kent McGuire, 1989

Introduction

There is a natural predilection in American education toward enormity, and it does not serve schools well.
—William J. Fowler, Jr., 1992

Schools keep getting bigger and bigger. Between 1940 and 1990, the total number of elementary and secondary public schools declined 69 percent—from approximately 200,000 to 62,037—despite a 70 percent increase in the U.S. population (Walberg 1992; Howley 1994). Consequently, the average school enrollment rose more than five times—from 127 to 653. In today's urban and suburban settings, high school enrollments of 2,000 and 3,000 are commonplace, and New York City has many schools with enrollments nearing 5,000 (Henderson and Raywid 1994).

School districts, too, have decreased in number and increased in size during this time period. The 117,108 school districts that existed in 1940 have experienced dramatic consolidation; they have decreased by 87 percent—to 15,367 (Walberg 1992). Not surprisingly, the largest schools can generally be found within the largest districts (Williams 1990).

Smith and DeYoung (1988) identify several factors driving this long-term consolidation trend. One has been the desire of school administrators to "demonstrate their commitment to the forces of science, progress, and modernization" by seeking to make schooling "'efficient,' a notion importantly borrowed from the private sector" (3). Smith and DeYoung also cite the 1957 launching of the Soviet space satellite Sputnik and the contemporary belief that catching up with the Soviet Union required bigger schools that could produce more scientists. Furthermore, they note that compliance with the school desegregation and special entitlement programs originating in the 1960s have resulted in additional school mergers.

Smith and DeYoung and many others note that James Conant's 1959 book, *The American High School Today*, greatly accelerated the momentum of the school consolidation move-

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ment (Pittman and Haughwout 1987; Stockard and Mayberry 1992; Walberg 1992; Williams 1990). Conant argued that, in order to be cost effective and to offer a sufficiently large and varied curriculum, a secondary school had to have at least 100 students in its graduating class. Conant claimed that the small high school was the number-one problem in education, and that its elimination should be a top priority (37-38).[1]

The push for school and district consolidation continues into the present (Schoggen and Schoggen 1988). That is unfortunate because, as the balance of this report documents, research has repeatedly found small schools to be superior to large schools on most measures and equal to them on the rest. This holds true for both elementary and secondary students of all ability levels and in all kinds of settings.[2]

The Research Base

What the Research is About

I reviewed 103 documents which identify a relationship between school size and some aspect(s) of schooling. Because several of the reviews cover the same research studies, and some of the studies are reported in more than one article, I deleted the redundant materials from my analysis and placed them, along with the non-research articles, in the General References section of the annotated bibliography. I retained 69 documents—49 primary sources (studies and evaluations), 14 secondary sources (reviews and syntheses), and six documents that report both reviews and studies. These form the basis of my analysis and are cited in the Key References section.

Forty of the key documents are concerned with secondary students, five with elementary students, nineteen with students at both levels, and ten with school staff as well as (or instead of) student populations. Forty-nine of the reports cite the effects of school size, nine look at outcomes produced by alternative schools, and eleven examine the effects of school-within-a-school (SWAS) arrangements.

Researchers and reviewers have investigated the effects of school and unit size on many student performance, attitude, and behavior measures. These include:

- Achievement - 31 documents
- Attitudes (toward school or particular school subjects) - 19
- Social behavior problems (discipline problems, vandalism, drugs/alcohol, etc.) - 14
- Levels of extracurricular participation - 17
- Feelings of belongingness vs. alienation - 6
- Interpersonal relations with other students and school staff - 14
- Attendance - 16
- Dropout rate - 10
- Self-concept (academic and general) - 9
- College-related variables (acceptance, completion, etc.) - 6

In addition, 12 of the reports address teachers' attitudes and collaboration, 10 concern the quality of the curriculum, and 11 focus on schooling costs. Many of the reports are concerned with more than one outcome area.

What is Meant by "Large" and "Small" Schools

> *There is no clear agreement on the dividing line between small and large schools.*—Davant T. Williams, 1990

"One might note that the term 'small school' has no concrete numerical limits," write Green and Stevens (1988, 11). One certainly might. In the first place, of the 69 key reports, only 27 mention any numbers at all in their analyses of large versus small schools. In the second place, the upward limit for a "small" school in those 27 documents ranges from 200 to 1,000 students; and the range for a "large" school is 300 to 5,000 students. Williams, however, writes that,

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[1] Conant's idea of an adequately large high school—one with 300 (grades 10-12) or 400 (grades 9-12)—would be considered a small school today. As several researchers have pointed out, Conant never advocated the schools with thousands of students for which his book was used as a rationale.

[2] Some researchers (e.g., Friedkin and Necochea 1988; Howley 1995) have found that large schools benefit high-SES students and hamper low-SES students to an even greater degree (see the annotated references). The majority of the research, however, indicates that small schools are beneficial to *all* students.

> On average, the research indicates that an effective size for an elementary school is in the range of 300-400 students and that 400-800 students is appropriate for a secondary school (7-8).

While many researchers argue that no school should be larger than 400 or 500 students, I use Williams's numbers in this report, since my own sense of the research is very similar to his.

Research Findings

"Professional faith in the virtues of larger schools persisted, virtually unchallenged, at least through the mid-1960s," writes Howley (1989, 3). The challenges began with Roger Barker and Paul Gump's 1964 book, *Big School, Small School: High School Size and Student Behavior*. Barker and Gump's research revealed that both the number and the variety of extracurricular activities in which students participate are significantly higher in small schools than in large ones. The small-school student was also more likely to hold important positions in the activities in which he or she participated and to derive greater satisfaction from participating. Although there is no conscious intent to deny participation opportunities to many students, large high schools nevertheless have this effect, leading Barker and Gump to conclude that small schools are best and that the supposed superiorities of large schools are "illusions" (195).[3]

In the more than 30 years since Barker and Gump published their research, many other investigators have challenged the assumption that bigger schools are better schools. Their findings are presented in the sections that follow. Findings from the research on school-within-a-school plans are presented in a separate section following the school size findings.

Quality of the Curriculum

> *It does not follow necessarily that more opportunities exist in larger schools.*
> —Kent McGuire, 1989

Many educators past and present have argued for large schools on grounds of curriculum quality. Following James Conant's original line of reasoning, they argue that larger schools can offer more numerous and more varied curricular offerings than small schools can. Therefore, goes the argument, operating small schools with more limited curricula is unfair to the students who attend them.

While this has a certain common sense appeal, examination of the research reveals that there simply is no reliable relationship between school size and curriculum quality (Fowler and Walberg 1991; Gregory 1992; Howley 1994, 1996; McGuire 1989; Melnick, et al. 1986; Monk 1987, 1992; Monk and Haller 1993; Nachtigal 1992; Pittman and Haughwout 1987; Rogers 1987; Williams 1990). For one thing, researchers have found that "it takes a lot of bigness to add a little variety"—that is, "on the average a 100% increase in enrollment yields only a 17% increase in variety of offerings" (Pittman and Haughwout, 337). Moreover, "[t]he strength of the relationship between school size and curricular offerings diminishes as schools become larger. Increases in the size of very small schools are associated with greater curricular gains than increases in the size of larger schools" (Monk 1992).

For another thing, researchers have found that the allegedly richer curriculum that larger schools are able to support tend to be made up, not of higher-level courses in, say, math or foreign languages, but rather of additional introductory courses in non-core areas. For still another, investigators have found that only five to twelve percent of the students in large schools avail themselves of the extra courses these schools typically offer (McGuire 1989; Monk 1992; Rogers 1987).

Finally, Monk, in his 1987 study of the size-curriculum relationship, concludes that, "it is possible to offer at the 400 pupil level a cur-

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[3] The Barker and Gump research shows that, in a small school, every student is needed to populate teams, offices, and clubs, and thus even marginal students are encouraged to participate and made to feel that they belong. As schools grow larger, opportunities for extracurricular participation also grow—*but not proportionately*. Typically, a twenty-fold increase in school population leads to only a five-fold increase in participation opportunities. Thus, in larger schools, a greater proportion of students are unneeded to fill participation slots—"redundant," as Barker and Gump put it.

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riculum that compares quite favorably in terms of breadth and depth with curriculums offered in much larger settings" (27).

Beyond these findings, the development and use of distance learning and other technologies in isolated settings is increasing and can be expected to further ameliorate curriculum inequalities.

Cost-Effectiveness

> *Small high schools cost more money only if one tries to maintain the big-school infrastructure....* —Thomas B. Gregory, 1992

Some educators and legislators have also argued that large schools are more cost-effective. Again, a closer look reveals that this is not necessarily true. Researchers have found that the relationship between size and costs varies depending on individual school circumstances (Gregory 1992; Howley 1996; McKenzie 1983; Melnick, et al. 1986; Nachtigal 1992; Robertson 1995; Rogers 1987; Walberg 1992; Williams 1990). Many small schools are operated very economically, while many large ones have exorbitant per-pupil costs.

McKenzie (1983) argues that many analyses of the school size-cost relationship are simplistic and do not yield useful information. He then provides a mathematical depiction of that relationship, which shows that it is U-shaped; that is, average per-pupil costs do decline up to a point as enrollment increases, reach a minimum, and then rise with further school growth. Researchers (e.g., Gregory 1992, Robertson 1995) claim that the large staff needed to manage and control large numbers of students accounts for this upturn in costs as schools become larger and larger.

Following an examination of both the curriculum quality and cost-effectiveness issues, Gregory (1992) writes,

> The *perceived* limitations in the program that small high schools can deliver and their presumed high cost regularly have been cited as justifications for our steady march toward giantism. The research convincingly stamps both of these views as misconceptions (10).

Academic Achievement

> *Size-achievement relationship is not clear, though some research indicates smaller schools facilitate higher achievement.* — Alan M. Burke, 1987

About half the student achievement research finds no difference between the achievement levels of students in large and small schools, including small alternative schools (Burke 1987; Caldas 1987; Edington and Gardner 1984; Fowler 1995; Gregory 1992; Haller, Monk, and Tien 1993; Howley 1996; Huang and Howley 1993; McGuire 1989; Melnick, et al. 1986; Smith and DeYoung 1988; Stockard and Mayberry 1992; Walberg 1992; Way 1985). The other half finds student achievement in small schools to be superior to that in large schools (Bates 1993; Eberts, Kehoe, and Stone 1982; Eichenstein 1994; Fowler and Walberg 1991; Kershaw and Blank 1993; Miller, Ellsworth, and Howell 1986; Robinson-Lewis 1991; Walberg 1992). None of the research finds large schools superior to small schools in their achievement effects. Consequently, we may safely say that student achievement in small schools is at least equal—and often superior—to student achievement in large schools. Achievement measures used in the research include school grades, test scores, honor roll membership, subject-area achievement, and assessment of higher-order thinking skills.

In reporting these conclusions, researchers are careful to point out that these results are found even when variables other than size—student attributes, staff characteristics, time-on-task, etc.—are held constant (Eberts, Kehoe, and Stone 1982, 27; Fowler and Walberg 1992). Since many small schools are rural schools, investigators have also wondered if it might be the ruralness—rather than the smallness—of these schools that is beneficial to students; research shows that *smallness* is beneficial, regardless of the setting of the small school (Stockard and Mayberry 1992; Walberg 1992). Walberg writes,

> ...even discounting the positive effects of rural location, smaller high schools yielded greater achievement and years of attained education after high school. Thus, smaller schools showed long-range effects independent of rural advantages (10).

Finally, whereas the research finds that small schools produce equal or superior achievement for students in general, the effects of small schools on the achievement of ethnic minority students and students of low socioeconomic status are the most positive of all (Berlin and Cienkus 1989; Eberts, Kehoe, and Stone 1982; Fowler 1995; Friedkin and Necochea 1988; Howley 1994, 1995; Huang and Howley 1993; Jewell 1989; Miller, Ellsworth, and Howell 1986; Rutter 1988; Stockard and Mayberry 1992). To put this a little differently, these researchers have found that large schools have a more negative impact on minority and low-SES students than on students in general. I will return to this point in a later discussion about school size as an equity issue.

Student Attitudes

> *Students in a small high school experience...an increasingly more positive attitude toward school.* — Thomas B. Gregory and Gerald R. Smith, 1987

Considerable research effort has been expended studying the relative effects of large and small schools on student attitudes toward school in general and toward particular school subjects. The research on student attitudes overwhelmingly favors small schools over large ones (Aptekar 1983; Bates 1993; Edington and Gardner 1984; Fowler 1995; Fowler and Walberg 1991; Gregory 1992; Gregory and Smith 1983, 1987; Howley 1994, 1996; Kershaw and Blank 1993; Miller, Ellsworth, and Howell 1986; Rutter 1988; Smith and DeYoung 1988; Smith, Gregory, and Pugh 1981; Walberg 1992). As with achievement, the research indicates that the attitudes of low-SES and minority students are especially sensitive to school size and benefit greatly from attending small schools.

Social Behavior

> *Behavior problems are so much greater in larger schools that any possible virtue of larger size is canceled out by the difficulties of maintaining an orderly learning environment.* —Jean Stockard and Maralee Mayberry, 1992

The research linking school size to social behavior has investigated everything from truancy and classroom disruption to vandalism, aggressive behavior, theft, substance abuse, and gang participation. This research shows that small schools have lower incidences of negative social behavior, however measured, than do large schools (Burke 1987; Duke and Perry 1978; Gottfredson 1985; Gregory 1992; Kershaw and Blank 1993; Rutter 1988; Stockard and Mayberry 1992). The social behavior of ethnic minority and low-SES students is even more positively impacted by small schools than that of other students.

Extracurricular Participation

> *Small schools allow greater student participation in extracurricular activities.*—James M. Kearney, 1994

As Barker and Gump first noted in their 1964 study, levels of extracurricular participation are significantly higher in small schools than in large ones (Burke 1987; Cawelti 1993; Foster and Martinez 1985; Fowler 1995; Fowler and Walberg 1991; Grabe 1981; Hamilton 1993; Holland and Andre 1991; Howley 1996; Kershaw and Blank 1993; Pittman and Haughwout 1987; Rogers 1987; Schoggen and Schoggen 1988; Smith and DeYoung 1988; Stockard and Mayberry 1992; Walberg 1992). These researchers have also found that students in small schools are involved in a greater variety of activities and that they derive more satisfaction from their participation than students in large schools. According to Hamilton's research,

> Students in the large schools were more polarized, with a group of active participants at one end of the continuum and a large group of students who did not participate in any extracurricular activities at the other. In the small schools there were few students who did not participate in anything (70).

In addition, at the conclusion of their large-scale 1988 study, Schoggen and Schoggen report that, although large schools offer more varied activities,

> ...the average large school student does not utilize these opportunities.

> Although the small school does not provide such a wealth of activities, the average student has a better experience as measured by the amount of involvement in the available activities (292).

The greater and more varied participation in extracurricular activities by students in small schools is the single best-supported finding in the school size research. Like the findings in other areas, findings about participation hold true regardless of setting and are most applicable to minority and low-SES students. Because research has identified important relationships between extracurricular participation and other desirable outcomes, such as positive attitudes and social behavior, this finding is especially significant.

Attendance

> *The attendance rate of participating students was better than that of a comparison group.* —Mary Lou McGanney, Dolores M. Mei, and Jan Rosenblum, 1989

The pattern of findings favoring small schools continues with the research on student attendance. Not only do students in smaller schools have higher attendance rates than those in large schools (Fowler 1995; Fowler and Walberg 1991; Gregory and Smith 1992; Howley 1994; Kershaw and Blank 1993; Smith and DeYoung 1988; Walberg 1992), but students who change from large schools to small, alternative secondary schools generally exhibit improvements in attendance (Bates 1993; Duke and Perry 1978; McGanney, Mei, and Rosenblum 1989; Robinson-Lewis 1991; Rutter 1988). Again, the minority or low-SES student is the most profoundly affected.

Dropouts

> *Strictly from the perspective of avoiding high rates of dropouts, it may be that smaller is better.* — Laurence A. Toenjes, 1989

Measured either as dropout rate or graduation rate, the holding power of small schools is considerably greater than that of large schools. Nine of the ten documents that address this topic reveal differences favoring or greatly favoring small schools (Fetler 1989; Gregory 1992; Jewell 1989; Pittman and Haughwout 1987; Rogers 1987; Smith and DeYoung 1988; Stockard and Mayberry 1992; Toenjes 1989; Walberg 1992), with the other document reporting mixed results. Toenjes concludes his study of the 21 largest school districts in Texas with this observation:

> [I]t may be that...the relevant conditions that exist in the smaller high school are much more conducive to keeping students in school than are the conditions in the larger high schools. If this is true, it raises a new equity issue, based not on how many dollars per pupil are spent, but on the size of the school to which the pupils are assigned (15).

In later sections of this report, I give further attention both to the "relevant conditions" for keeping students in school and to the matter of equity.

Belongingness/Alienation

> *Several studies suggest that students in small high schools...have a greater "sense of belonging" to the group than students in larger schools.* — Jean Stockard and Maralee Mayberry, 1992

Concerned about the emotional effects of different kinds of school environments, some researchers have studied the degree to which students feel a sense of belonging in their schools. Given the foregoing findings about other student variables, it is not surprising that these investigators have found a much greater sense of belonging (sometimes expressed as a lower level of alienation) among students in small schools than in large ones (Burke 1987; Campbell, et al. 1981; Edington and Gardner 1984; Foster and Martinez 1985; Fowler and Walberg 1991; Gregory 1992; Gregory and Smith 1983, 1992, Howley 1994; Pittman and Haughwout 1987; Smith, Gregory, and Pugh 1981; Stockard and Mayberry 1992; Stolp 1995; Walberg 1992).

Feeling alienated from one's school environment is both a negative thing in itself and is often found in connection with other undesirable outcomes. Foster and Martinez's review of previous research, plus their own study of

student participation and attitudes, led them to conclude that,

> Student alienation and student participation in cocurricular activities have been found to be negatively correlated... Unfortunately, alienation affects confidence, self-esteem, and responsibility for self-direction (57-58).

Self-Concept

> *Evidence of increases in social bonding to teachers and school, self-esteem, academic self-concept, locus of control and sociocentric reasoning suggest that [small alternative] programs can respond constructively to students' underlying needs.*—Robert A. Rutter, 1988

Foster and Martinez's observations about students' perceptions of themselves is borne out by Grabe (1981), Rutter (1988), and Stockard and Mayberry (1992). These researchers have found that both personal and academic self-regard are more positive in smaller schools. Closely related to this are the findings on the quality of the interpersonal milieu in these environments.

Interpersonal Relations

> *Students perceive the most positive conditions of the alternative school to be the interpersonal relationships with faculty members, the supportive atmosphere of the school, and the opportunities provided by the school.* —Cheryl A. Kershaw and MaryAnn Blank, 1993

Some researchers approach the matter of school size from a slightly different angle, querying students about the interpersonal climate in their schools. This research focuses on elements such as relations among students and between students and teachers, especially teacher attention and demonstrations of caring toward students. Positive correlations between small schools and favorable interpersonal relations have been found by Bates (1993); Burke (1987); Fowler and Walberg (1991); Gottfredson (1985); Gregory and Smith (1982, 1983); Smith, Gregory, and Pugh (1981); Kershaw and Blank (1993); Pittman and Haughwout (1987); Rutter (1988); Smith and DeYoung (1988); and Stockard and Mayberry (1992). None of the research consulted for this report found equal or superior interpersonal relations in large schools.

College Variables

> *[Students] did not differ in terms of grade-point averages or persistence in college, regardless of their school district's characteristics, including size of graduating class.*— William J. Fowler, Jr., 1992

Some who have argued for large schools on grounds of curricular size and variety have also claimed that this alleged curricular superiority provides better preparation for college. Like the curriculum argument, the assertions about college readiness have been disproved by research. Six documents address the relative merits of large and small schools vis à vis college-related variables—entrance examination scores, acceptance rates, attendance, grade point average, and completion. Five found small schools equal (Rogers 1987; Fowler 1992; Jewell 1989) or superior (Burke 1987; Swanson 1988) to large ones in their capacity to prepare students for college entrance and success.

Teacher Attitudes

> *Large schools appear to promote negative teacher perceptions of school administration and low staff morale.* —Denise C. Gottfredson, 1985

There is less research on school size in relation to teacher or administrator variables, but what there is favors smaller schools (Eberts, Kehoe, and Stone 1982; Gottfredson 1985; Gregory 1992; Johnson 1990; Miller, Ellsworth, and Howell 1986; Stockard and Mayberry 1992). These researchers examined administrator attitudes toward their work, and teacher attitudes toward their work, their administration, and one another, as well as the incidence of cooperation/collaboration with their colleagues.

School-Within-A-School Plans

> *The major challenge to schools within schools has been obtaining sufficient separateness and autonomy to permit staff members to generate a distinctive environment and to carry out their own vision of schooling.* —Mary Ann Raywid, 1985

What They Are

In addition to the research on school size, there is a growing body of literature on school-within-a-school (SWAS) plans. SWAS arrangements are intended to mitigate the negative effects of large schools by organizing their students into smaller groups. SWAS plans are of different kinds and have different purposes, as identified by Cawelti (1993, 19-21):

- **Vertical house plans.** In these arrangements, students in grades 9-12 (or 10-12) are assigned to groups of a few hundred each within a large high school. Each "house" has its own discipline plan, parent involvement, student activity program, student government, and social activities.

- **Ninth grade house plan.** Ninth graders have their own "house" within a large high school and have smaller classes and counseling for students to ease the transition into high school.

- **Special curriculum schools.** Students are organized into houses based on special interests or needs—English-as-a-Second-Language, for example.

- **Charter schools.** These are similar to special curriculum schools, except that the motivation for creating them tends to come from groups of teachers or parents who have recognized a particular focus needed by students.[4]

[4] Cawelti also discusses teacher-advisor programs and block scheduling as strategies for arranging students in small groups within large schools, but since these are not actual SWAS plans, I have not included his discussion of them here.

Research Findings

Findings about the effects of schools-within-schools must be regarded as tentative. Compared with the research on the effects of school size, the research on SWAS structures is less extensive, less conclusive, and often less rigorous (e.g., surveys of teacher perception rather than comparative studies). Further, the reports of these studies do not always identify the extent to which the SWAS is a truly self-contained and distinct entity within a larger school building. This is important to know, because some researchers (Howley 1996; Meier 1995; Raywid 1985) assert that establishing schools-within-schools will not allow us to reap the benefits associated with small schools unless they are "separate entities, administratively, programmatically, culturally, and probably with respect to aims" (Howley 1996). Meier makes this point even more forcefully:

> A small school must be a school—not a school-within-a-school (whatever that is) or a "mini-school" or a house or a family. It can be just one of many housed in a shared building, but a building does not equal a school. A school must be independent, with all that the word implies, with control over a sufficient number or parameters that count—budget, staffing, scheduling, and the specifics of curriculum and assessment, just to mention a few. And power indeed to put toilet paper in bathrooms. And mirrors, too (1995, 115).

By this standard, some of the SWAS arrangements described above and, indeed, some programs reviewed for this paper, would not be likely to produce benefits of the magnitude small schools are able to confer upon their students and staffs.

With these important qualifications, we can say that such research as there is on the effect of SWAS arrangements generally finds them beneficial. Whether SWAS students are compared with non-SWAS peers in large schools or with their own pre-SWAS performance, researchers have noted benefits in the following areas:

- Academic achievement (Burke 1987; Boloz and Blessing 1994; Eichenstein 1994; Levine and Sherk 1990; Robinson-Lewis 1991; Way 1985; Welch and McKenna 1988)
- Social behavior (Burke 1987; Fouts 1994; Goldberg 1982; Way 1985; Welch and McKenna 1988)
- Attitudes (Burke 1987; Boloz and Blessing 1994; Way 1985)
- Satisfaction (Burke 1987; Eichenstein 1994; Nickle, et al. 1990)
- Student-teacher relations (Boloz and Blessing 1994; Goldberg 1982; Welch and McKenna 1988)
- Attendance (Eichenstein 1994; Fouts 1994; Gordon 1993; Robinson-Lewis 1991)

Why Smaller Is Better

> *Why does smaller seem to work better?...people seem to learn, to change, and to grow in situations in which they feel that they have some control, some personal influence, some efficacy.* — Barney M. Berlin and Robert C. Cienkus, 1989

Finding that small schools and schooling units are at least equal and often superior to large ones, researchers and reviewers have sought to identify the factors responsible for the impressive attainments of these schools. In doing so, they draw from their own observations and from survey responses given by school staff and students in large and small schools. Not surprisingly, many of the practices identified are in operation largely because they are so much easier to implement and manage in smaller environments than in large ones.

One key feature of small schools and units is that everyone's participation is needed for clubs, teams, and student government to have an adequate number of members. It is therefore much less likely that students in small environments will be redundant, overlooked, or isolated. Noted earlier in this report, this point is discussed in detail in Schoggen and Schoggen (1988).

Closely related to the participation factor is the observation that people in small schools and units come to know and care about one another to a much greater degree than is possible in large schools. This applies to relationships among students, among staff members, between staff and students, and between the school and its surrounding community (Bates 1993; Berlin and Cienkus 1989; Miller, Ellsworth, and Howell 1986; Rutter 1988; Schoggen and Schoggen 1988). Students who have moved from a large school to an alternative school or school-within-a-school nearly always cite the attentive, caring staff as the reason for their academic and attitudinal improvements.

The higher rates of parent involvement in smaller schools/units is frequently cited as a major positive influence on student achievement and attitudes (e.g., Berlin and Cienkus 1989; Burke 1987; Raze 1985; Walberg 1992). Walberg writes,

> Parents...are more likely to know the principal and teachers, be informed about their children's progress, participate more fully in school activities, and influence decision making. This can occur partly because the school is smaller but also because it is likely to be physically and psychologically close to students' homes (21).

Staff and students generally have a stronger sense of personal efficacy in small schools and units (Berlin and Cienkus 1989; Rutter 1988; Stockard and Mayberry 1992). Students take more of the responsibility for their own learning, learning activities are more frequently individualized, classes are smaller, and scheduling is much more flexible (Duke and Perry 1978; Kershaw and Blank 1993; Nickle, et al. 1990). The learning needs of students, not the organizational needs of the school, drive school operations (Berlin and Cienkus 1989; Rutter 1988).

In terms of instructional approaches and strategies, teachers in small schools/units are more likely to form teaching teams, integrate their subject-matter content, employ multiage grouping and cooperative learning, and use alternative assessments. There is also, in these schools and units, a greater emphasis on learning which is experiential and relevant to

the world outside of school (Fouts 1994; Kershaw and Blank 1993; Nickle 1994; Raze 1985; Rutter 1988; Walberg 1992).

School Size and Educational Equity

> *It appears that keeping schools relatively small might be more efficacious and may exhibit rare consensus as a goal of educators, the public, and those seeking equality of opportunity for students.* —William J. Fowler, Jr. and Herbert J. Walberg, 1991

We know that, in general, the states with the largest schools and school districts have the lowest school achievement, highest dropout rates, and least favorable teacher-student ratios (Jewell 1989; Walberg 1992). We know, too, as documented earlier in this report, that the students who are most adversely affected by attending large schools are members of racial minority groups and those from low socioeconomic backgrounds.

Unfortunately, it is also the case that minority and low-SES students are primarily "concentrated in states that have large school districts and school districts that have large schools" (Jewell 1989, 150). Jewell writes,

> "...if minority students must struggle more to achieve a solid public education and if large districts and large schools find it increasingly difficult to achieve solid educational results for their students, we may be acting contrary to the interests of all concerned by organizing our public education system in a manner which assigns high proportions of minority youngsters to large schools within very large school districts." (152)

Summary and Conclusion

> *Our data, based upon general tendencies, persist in repeating a single message*—smaller seems to be better. — Robert W. Jewell, 1989

The following list highlights the major points identified in this paper:

1. School consolidation has been carried out through much of this century, resulting in many fewer and much larger schools and school districts. Consolidation efforts continue into the present time.

2. The research base on the relative effects of large and small schools is large and quite consistent. The research base on the effects of school-within-a-school (SWAS) arrangements is smaller and less conclusive.

3. There is no clear agreement among researchers and educators about what constitutes a "small" school or a "large" school. Many researchers, however, indicate that an appropriate and effective size is 300-400 students for an elementary school and 400-800 students for a secondary school.

4. Much school consolidation has been based on the beliefs that larger schools are less expensive to operate and have higher-quality curricula than small schools. Research has demonstrated, however, that neither of these assertions is necessarily true.

5. Academic achievement in small schools is at least equal—and often superior—to that of large schools.

6. Student attitudes toward school in general and toward particular school subjects are more positive in small schools.

7. Student social behavior—as measured by truancy, discipline problems, violence, theft, substance abuse, and gang participation—is more positive in small schools.

8. Levels of extracurricular participation are much higher and more varied in small schools than large ones, and students in small schools derive greater satisfaction from their extracurricular participation.

9. Student attendance is better in small schools than in large ones.

10. A smaller percentage of student drop out of small schools than large ones.

11. Student have a greater sense of belonging in small schools than in large ones.

12. Student academic and general self-concepts are higher in small schools than in large ones.

13. Interpersonal relations between and among students, teachers, and administrators are more positive in small schools than in large ones.

14. Students from small and large high schools do not differ from one another on college-related variables such as entrance examination scores, acceptance rates, attendance, grade point average, and completion.

15. Teacher attitudes toward their work and their administrators are more positive in small schools than in large ones.

16. Attributes associated with small school size that researchers have identified as accounting for their superiority include,

    a. Everyone's participation is needed to populate the school's offices, teams, clubs, etc., so a far smaller percentage of students is overlooked or alienated.

    b. Adults and students in the school know and care about one another to a greater degree than is possible in large schools.

    c. Small schools have a higher rate of parent involvement.

    d. Students and staff generally have a stronger sense of personal efficacy in small schools.

    e. Students in small schools take more of the responsibility for their own learning; their learning activities are more often individualized, experiential, and relevant to the world outside of school; classes are generally smaller; and scheduling is much more flexible.

    f. Grouping and instructional strategies associated with higher student performance are more often implemented in small schools—team teaching, integrated curriculum, multiage grouping (especially for elementary children), cooperative learning, and performance assessments.

17. The evidence for the effectiveness of school-within-a-school (SWAS) arrangements is much more limited, but it, suggests that students benefit from this form of organization if the SWAS is sufficiently separate and distinct from the other school(s) housed in the same building.

18. Poor students and those of racial and ethnic minorities are more adversely affected—academically, attitudinally, and behaviorally—by attending large schools than are other students. Unfortunately, poor and minority students continue to be concentrated in large schools.

Despite this persuasive support for small schools, a gap remains—indeed *grows*—between research and practice regarding school size. "The preponderance of professional literature in the past decade," writes Williams,

> indicates that educational researchers support the concept of small school effectiveness. It appears, however, that the determinants of school size are seldom the result of research.... More often, school size is the result of other factors—political, economic, social, demographic...(12).

We who have become convinced of the superiority of small schools have, as our next challenge, the task of communicating our findings to those who have the power to influence decisions about the size of our schools.

Key References

Aptekar, L. "Mexican-American High School Students' Perception of School." *Adolescence* 18/70 (Summer 1983): 345-357.

Reports the results of a study comparing the attitudes of juniors and seniors in two predominantly Hispanic high schools—one small and one *very* small—toward several aspects of their school experience, including policy, school as a whole, teachers, administrators, and involvement in school activities. Students at the very small school had more positive outlooks regarding most of the study's 120 variables.

Barker, R., and Gump, P. *Big School, Small School: High School Size and Student Behavior*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1964.

Reports research on the relative merits of large and small schools in terms of their effects on both academic and extracurricular outcomes. One finding is that levels of extracurricular participation are much higher in small schools than in large ones. This study is frequently cited by subsequent researchers investigating the effects of school size.

Bates, J. T. "Portrait of a Successful Rural Alternative School." *Rural Educator* 14/3 (Spring 1993): 20-24.

Describes a successful rural alternative school for at-risk secondary students, identifies the practices that appear to account for its success, and presents results of a survey of its students. Finds that the key features are the school's small size, its caring staff, its flexibility, and its close relationship with its community.

Berlin, B. M., and Cienkus, R. C. "Size: The Ultimate Educational Issue?" *Education and Urban Society* 21/2 (February 1989): 228-231.

Summarizes key findings from this issue of *Education and Urban Society* and provides an orientation to the individual articles. Emphasizes three main findings: (1) smaller is better for districts, schools, and classes; (2) low-SES children benefit more from smallness than higher-SES children; and (3) children's instructional needs, rather than the schools organizational needs, should determine how instruction is organized and conducted.

Boloz, S. A., and Blessing, C. *Walking on Sacred Ground: A Navajo School-within-a-School Model*. 1994 (ED 3667 515).

Describes a SWAS in rural Arizona that serves 450 at-risk and limited-English-proficient Navajo children in grades K-2 using a child-centered, process-oriented, literacy-based model. Preliminary outcomes include high student-teacher camaraderie, higher student achievement, and better attitudes toward reading than a group of control students.

Brown, J. *Missouri Teachers Experience Stress*. 1984 (ED 253 313).

Seeks to identify the levels and kinds of stress experienced by the 271 Missouri elementary teachers who responded to a mail survey. Older teachers experienced less stress over administrative and parental factors than younger ones, and teachers of higher grade levels experienced more stress over student values and attitudes. Respondents found overcrowded classes stressful, but the only effect of large school enrollments was that teachers experienced parent values and attitudes as more stressful.

Burke, A. M. *Making a Big School Smaller: The School-Within-a-School Arrangement for Middle Level Schools*. Orting, WA: Orting Middle School, May 1987 (ED 303 890).

Reviews a large body of literature on secondary and elementary school size and on school-within-a-school arrangements to derive implications for middle/junior high schools. Concludes that small middle schools and SWAS arrangements are desirable for these young adolescents on grounds of achievement, behavior, attitudes, and teacher and parent satisfaction.

Caldas, S. J. "Reexamination of Input and Process Factor Effects on Public School Achievement." *Journal of Educational Research* 86/4 (March/April 1987): 206-214.

Examines data from the Louisiana public schools to determine the effects of various background and school-controllable variables on student achievement. Found that background variables exert a much more powerful influence on achievement than school-controllable variables—of which only school attendance had a significant effect. School size was unrelated to school achievement.

Campbell, W. J.; Cotterell, J. L.; Robinson, N. M.; and Sadler, D. R. "Effects of School Size upon Some Aspects of

Personality." *The Journal of Educational Administration* 19/2 (Summer 1981): 201-231.

Reports the result of an Australian study in which large-school and small-school students (who would be called seventh graders in the U.S.) were surveyed on eight personality dimensions to determine ways in which school size might affect adolescent development. Most strongly affected were the variables "concern for persons" and "sense of cohesion."

Conant, J. *The American High School Today: A First Report to Interested Citizens*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959.

Argues that small schools—those with less than 100 students per class—are not able to provide an adequately diverse curriculum to serve the needs of American high school students. Favored the establishment of "comprehensive" high schools that could provide rich curricular offerings. This has been an extremely influential book, leading to the establishment of high schools considerably larger than Conant ever envisioned.

Duke, D. L., and Perry, C. "Can Alternative Schools Succeed Where Benjamin Spock, Spiro Agnew, and B. F. Skinner Have Failed?" *Adolescence* 13/51 (Fall 1978): 375-392.

Analyzes data from surveys and on-site observations at 18 alternative high schools in California to determine why these schools have so few discipline problems compared with regular public high schools. Identifies several factors, including the smaller size of the alternative schools.

Eberts, R. W.; Kehoe, E.; and Stone, J. A. *The Effect of School Size on Student Outcomes. Final Report*. Eugene, OR: Center for Educational Policy and Management, University of Oregon, June 1982 (ED 245 382).

Uses data from 300 school districts nationwide to identify relationships between school size and many other factors. Highlights include that teacher satisfaction was greater in smaller schools, and student achievement was higher in small and medium-size schools than in large schools.

Edington, E. D., and Gardener, C. E. "The Relationship of School Size to Scores in the Affective Domain from the Montana Testing Service Examination." *Education* 105/1 (Fall 1984): 40-45.

Compares responses in five affective areas by sixth and eleventh grade students from large and small schools in Montana over a two-year period. Several subgoals were measured in the areas of communication attitude, attitude toward school, character, cooperation, and change. Students from smaller schools expressed more positive responses on nearly all measures than those from larger schools.

Edington, E. D., and Martellaro, H. C. "Does School Size Have Any Relationship to Academic Achievement?" *Rural Educator* 11/2 (Winter 1989-1990): 6-11.

Examines data on school size, student achievement, and other variable such as Title I eligibility and ethnicity, to determine which variables were related to the achievement of New Mexico students over a four-year period. School size and achievement were unrelated. Title I eligibility and the presence of Native American and Hispanic American populations were negatively related to achievement.

Eichenstein, R. *Project Achieve, Part I: Qualitative Findings 1993-94*. Brooklyn, NY: Office of Educational Research, New York City Board of Education, August 1994 (ED 379 388).

Identifies the structures, practices, and outcomes of "house units" operating within 10 New York City public high schools. Averaging 250 students each, the houses feature heterogeneous grouping and a variety of support services. The units had positive effects on student attendance, responsiveness, and grades, and students expressed satisfaction with the "house" arrangement.

Fetler, M. "School Dropout Rates, Academic Performance, Size, and Poverty: Correlates of Educational Reform." *Educational*

Evaluation and Policy Analysis 11/2 (Summer 1989): 109-116.

Identifies relationships among dropout rates, achievement, school size, and AFDC recipient status using data from all California secondary schools over a two-year period. Various relationships were identified, including a correlation between high achievement and low dropout rates and between large size and high dropout rates.

Foster, C. M., and Martinez, I. "The Effects of School Enrollment Size in the Middle and Junior High School on Teacher and Student Attitude and Student Self-Concept." *Research in Rural Education* 3/2 (Winter 1985): 57-60.

Examines the relationship between school size and student and teacher variables at the middle and junior high school levels in three states. School enrollments ranged from 200 to 1500. Junior high school teachers preferred larger schools, and middle school teachers preferred smaller ones. Junior high and middle school students' attitudes toward school and self-concepts were both unrelated to school size.

Fouts, J. T. *A School within a School: Evaluation Results of the First Year of a Restructuring Effort.*" Kent, WA: Kent-Meridian High School, January 1994 (ED 370 195).

Evaluates the implementation and initial results produced by a health/science SWAS serving 70 students in a large Washington high school. First-year results indicate that program students exhibited more growth in writing skills, fewer absences, and fewer discipline referrals than a randomly selected comparison group.

Fowler, W. J., Jr. "School Size and Student Outcomes." *Advances in Educational Productivity* 5 (1995): 3-26.

Reviews research on the relationship between school size and student attitudes, achievement, attendance, extracurricular participation, and satisfaction. Findings in all areas favor small schools, especially for minority students.

Fowler, W. J., Jr., and Walberg, H. J. "School Size, Characteristics, and Outcomes." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 13/2 (Summer 1991): 189-202.

Examines data from nearly 300 public secondary schools in New Jersey to identify relationships among school and pupil characteristics and school outcomes. Large school size was negatively related to student achievement, participation in school activities, satisfaction, attendance, feelings of belonging, and school climate.

Friedkin, N. E., and Necochea, J. "School System Size and Performance: A Contingency Perspective." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 10/3 (Fall 1988): 237-249.

Advances and provides empirical support for a theory of the differential effect of school system size in different kinds of settings. Concludes that large systems benefit high-SES populations because they have greater resources and a lower incidence of students with exceptional problems and needs. Large systems have negative effects on low-SES populations because of more limited resources and a higher incidence of students with exceptional problems and needs.

Goldberg, M. F. "What's Happening in... Shoreham-Wading River High School?" *Phi Delta Kappan* 64/2 (October 1982): 132.

Provides an overview of the "House Groups" arrangement at a New York high school, which features long-term, supportive relationships between students and their staff advisors. In operation since 1973, the plan is credited for the school's positive climate and low incidence of graffiti and vandalism.

Gordon, R. "The School within a School Program: Preventing Failure and Dropout among At-Risk High School Students." *ERS Spectrum* 11/1 (Winter 1993): 27-30.

Reports outcomes of evaluations of the Des Moines, Iowa school-within-a-school program, which provides basic skills,

career guidance, and counseling support to at-risk students in grades 7-10. The program operates in five high and two middle schools. Outcomes include a reduced dropout rate, increased attendance, and progress toward graduation requirements.

Gottfredson, D. C. *School Size and School Disorder*. Baltimore, MD: Center for Social Organization of Schools, Johns Hopkins University, July 1985 (ED 261 456).

Uses national secondary school survey data to identify relationships among school size, school disorder, and many other school variables and student characteristics. Results show that large schools are negatively related to school safety and that the communications problems and lack of staff involvement that often occur in large schools are related to school disorder. While some studies suggest that large schools are more disorderly because they are impersonal, this study produced no such finding.

Grabe, M. "School Size and the Importance of School Activities." *Adolescence* 16/61 (Spring 1981): 21-31.

Compares students from large high schools with those from smaller high schools in terms of their levels of participation in school activities, their self-concepts, and their feelings of alienation. Smaller school students were more involved in school activities and in more diverse activities than those in larger schools, and participation levels were positively related to self-concept. Data indicate that smaller school students were also more alienated, and the researcher offers possible reasons for this outcome.

Gregory, T. "Small Is Too Big: Achieving a Critical Anti-Mass in the High School." In *Source Book on School and District Size, Cost, and Quality*. Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota University, Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs; Oak Brook, IL: North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, 1992, 1-31 (ED 361 159).

Cites findings about the failure of large high schools to meet the needs of either students or teachers. Identifies the advantages of small schools, such as better attitudes and student behavior, that are consistently found by research. Argues that school organization and financing can be managed in such a way that very small high schools (with 250 students or less) can offer excellent learning programs affordably. Profiles a highly successful small Colorado high school.

Gregory, T. B., and Smith, G. R. "Alternative Schools." In *Encyclopedia of Educational Research*, Fifth Edition, Volume 1, edited by H. E. Mitzel. New York: The Free Press, 1982, 120-125.

Draws from the research on the nature and effects of alternative schools for this section of the encyclopedia. Claims that the research base is small, but so far indicates that these schools meet students needs; reduce delinquency, crime, vandalism, absenteeism, and tardiness; and enhance self-concept, social skills and attitudes toward school. Identifies small size, choice, informality and student empowerment as reasons for these schools' success.

Gregory, T. B., and Smith, G. R. *Differences Between Alternative and Conventional Schools in Meeting Students' Needs*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, April 1983 (ED 232 257).

Compares responses of students and teachers in 14 alternative and 11 conventional secondary schools in 10 states as to how well the schools are meeting students needs. Questionnaires covered variables relating to security, social interaction, esteem, and self-actualization. Both students and teachers in the alternative schools rated their schools much higher in all areas than did the teachers and students in the conventional high schools.

Haller, E. J. "High School Size and Student Indiscipline: Another Aspect of the School

Consolidation Issue." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 14/2 (Summer 1992): 145-156.

Uses data from the large-scale High School and Beyond study to determine whether it is the ruralness or the smallness of small rural schools that is responsible for the lower levels of truancy and disorder in these schools as compared with larger suburban or urban schools. Findings indicate that consolidating small rural schools into larger ones would create only trivial increases in these discipline problems.

Haller, E. J.; Monk, D. H.; and Tien, L. T. "Small Schools and Higher-Order Thinking Skills." *Journal of Research in Rural Education* 9/2 (Fall 1993): 66-73.

Compares the performance of tenth graders from small and large schools on measures of higher-order thinking in mathematics and science. Although students from large schools had more advanced math and science courses available to them than those from small schools, there were no differences between the two groups on measures of higher-order thinking skills.

Hamilton, S. F. "Synthesis of Research on the Social Side of Schooling." *Educational Leadership* 40/5 (February 1983): 65-72.

Discusses the purposes and methods of ecological research, then applies these to the study of particular small and large schools in order to identify differences, particularly in levels of student participation in extracurricular activities. Students in small schools had both more and more varied activities than those in large high schools.

Holland, A., and Andre, T. "The Relationship of Self-Esteem to Selected Personal and Environmental Resources of Adolescents." *Adolescence* 29/114 (Summer 1994): 345-360.

Examines relationships among school size, gender, gender role identification, extracurricular activities, parent variables, and self-esteem. There were no consistent relationships between school size and self-esteem. Both males and females from smaller schools were more likely to participate in extracurricular activities than those from large schools.

Howley, C. *The Academic Effectiveness of Small-Scale Schooling (An Update).* ERIC Digest. Charleston, WV: Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, June 1994 (ED 372 897).

Summarizes research on the school size-academic achievement relationship and concludes that smaller schools correlate with higher achievement for students in general and for disadvantaged students most of all. No significant relationships were identified between school size and higher-order thinking skills. Argues that school size is a restructuring issue deserving greater attention from reformers.

Howley, C. B. "The Matthew Principle: A West Virginia Replication?" *Education Policy Analysis Archives* 3/18 (November 15, 1995): 1-25. Electronic journal: http://seamonkey.ed.asu.edu/epaa/v13n18.html

Replicates and expands a 1988 California study of elementary and secondary schools showing that large schools benefit the affluent and that small schools benefit the economically disadvantaged to an even greater degree. This study corroborated the findings of the earlier one (see Friedkin and Necochea 1988 above). The researcher notes that West Virginia has unfortunately closed 20 percent of its schools, most of them small, since 1990 when the study was conducted.

Huang, G., and Howley, C. "Mitigating Disadvantage: Effects of Small-Scale Schooling on Student Achievement in Alaska." *Journal of Research in Rural Education* 9/3 (Winter 1993): 137-149.

Examines data on more than 13,000 Alaska fourth, sixth, and eighth graders who had been in the same school district for at least four years in relation to school size and socioeconomic status. Disadvantaged students in small schools significantly outperformed those in large schools on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills.

Jewell, R. S. "School and School District Size Relationships: Costs, Results, Minorities, and Private School Enrollments." *Education and Urban Society* 21/2 (February 1989): 140-153.

Compares data on school system size, district size, and school size to other variables including income levels, school costs, minority enrollments, college test scores, graduation rates, teachers' salaries, pupil/teacher ratios, private school enrollments, and tax rates for public education. Finds, among other things, that small schools and districts have higher graduation rates, even after controlling for the proportion of minority students, and that most minority students are enrolled in large schools and districts.

Johnson, S. M. *Teachers at Work: Achieving Success in Our Schools*. New York: Basic Books, 1990.

Reports on a study of 115 teachers regarded as "very good" by their principals. Teachers described their experiences and beliefs regarding workplace quality, home-school relations, school governance, professional growth, and other topics. One finding: teachers in small schools had much more influence on the ways their schools functioned than teachers in large schools.

Kershaw, C. A., and Blank, M. A. *Student and Educator Perceptions of the Impact of an Alternative School Structure*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Atlanta, GA, April 1993 (ED 360 729).

Reviews literature on alternative school programs and reports the results of a study on the effects of one alternative school. The perceptions of students, teachers, counselors, and an administrator are reported and compared with conditions at the larger "base" schools that student subjects had also attended. Respondents felt the smaller, more structured, and more personable environment of the alternative school was beneficial to students.

Levine, D. U., and Sherk, J. K. *Effective Implementation of a Comprehension-Improvement Approach in Secondary Schools*. Kansas City, MO: Center for the study of Metropolitan Problems in Education, Missouri University, May 1990 (ED 327 830).

Depicts activities undertaken to improve students' reading comprehension at several urban secondary schools, including eight schools-within-schools for low-achieving students in grade 9. Participating teachers used local variations of a program intended to help them acquire and use comprehension-improvement strategies. Teacher surveys revealed positive results, including gains in reading comprehension, at all participating schools.

Lindsay, P. "The Effect of High School Size on Student Participation, Satisfaction, and Attendance." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 4/1 (Spring 1982): 57-65.

Looks at the relationship between school size and the attendance, participation levels, and satisfaction of high school seniors across the U.S. Even after adjusting for the effects of setting, SES, and academic ability, smaller school size was found to be positively related to all three dependent variables for both girls and boys.

McGanney, M. L.; Mei, D. M.; and Rosenblum, J. *Ninth Grade Houses: The Program and Its Impact in New York City Public High Schools*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA, March 1989 (ED 306 284).

Presents information on the implementation of ninth-grade house plans in 97 New York high schools. Participating teachers and administrators had favorable views toward the program, and the attendance rates of participating students was better than that of a comparison group. Includes recommendations for program continuation.

McGuire, K. "School Size: The Continuing Controversy." *Education and Urban Society* 21/2 (February 1989): 164-174.

Discusses biases and other flaws in the methods usually used to determine the relationship between school size and cost, and between school size and educational quality. Speculates that factors other than size itself—such as whether students engage in active or passive learning—are the main determinants of educational success.

McKenzie, P. *The Distribution of School Size: Some Cost Implications*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, April 1983 (ED 232 256).

Remarks that many analyses of the school size-cost relationship are simplistic and do not yield useful information. Discusses and provides mathematical formula for the dispersion-cost relationship, which reveals that average per pupil costs decline up to a point as enrollment increases, reach a minimum, and then rise with further school enrollment size increases.

Melnick, S. A.; Shibles, M. R.; Gable, R. K.; and Grzymkowski, V. *A Comparative Study of the Relationships between School District Size and Selected Indicators of Educational Quality*. Hartford, CT: Connecticut Association of School Administrators, Small/Rural Schools Committee, February 1986 (ED 305 215).

Compares small schools and large, non-urban schools in Connecticut in terms of costs, staffing, curriculum, achievement, attendance, dropouts, and graduate preparation. No significant differences were found on most measures, but large schools were found to offer more advanced courses and have higher percentages of students continuing to higher education, and smaller schools had a larger teacher-student ratio.

Merritt, R. "The Effect of Enrollment and School Organization on the Dropout Rate." *Phi Delta Kappan* 65/3 (November 1983): 224.

Presents findings from a study of dropout rates at 272 secondary schools in Mississippi. Larger schools (those with 400 or more students) had higher dropout rates than smaller schools, unless the grade levels served are taken into account. Large schools serving grades 7-12 had significantly lower dropout rates than those serving only 9-12 or 10-12, presumably because students experience fewer transitions.

Miller, J. W.; Ellsworth, R.; and Howell, J. "Public Elementary Schools Which Deviate from the Traditional SES-Achievement Relationship." *Educational Research Quarterly* 10/3 (1986): 31-50.

Reports the results of a study that sought to identify reasons that elementary schools exhibit reading achievement that is either significantly higher or significantly lower than the socioeconomic levels of the student population would predict. One key finding is that higher-than-expected reading performance was exhibited by low-SES students attending small schools.

Monk, D. H. "Modern Conceptions of Educational Quality and State Policy Regarding Small Schooling Units." In *Source Book on School and District Size, Cost, and Quality*. Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota University, Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs; Oak Brook, IL: North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, 1992, 34-49 (ED 361 160).

Discusses research and contemporary thinking about the relationship between educational quality and the size of schools and school districts. Argues that, despite the trend toward reorganization of small schools and districts into fewer and larger ones, such reorganization does not guarantee improvements in student access to courses or in student outcomes. Encourages policymakers to consider several suggested alternatives to the elimination of small schools and districts.

Monk, D. H. "Secondary School Enrollment and Curricular Comprehensiveness." *Economics of Education Review* 6/2 (1987): 137-150.

Looks at the relationship between school size and the breadth and depth of the curriculum. Finds that increasing school

size up to about 400 students tends to bring with it a richer curriculum. For various reasons, increases beyond 400 students do not generally broaden or deepen the curriculum. Recommends maintaining secondary enrollments at the 400-student level.

Monk, D. H., and Haller, E. J. "Predictors of High School Academic Course Offerings: The Role of School Size." *American Educational Research Journal* 30/1 (Spring 1993): 3-21.

Examines relationships among the factors of size, SES, unionization of teachers, setting, and grade configuration on the scope of the high school curriculum. Finds differential effects of size on curriculum owing to the influence of the other factors, suggesting that there is no one optimal high school size.

Monk, D. H., and Kadamus, J. A. "The Reform of School District Organizational Structure." *Advances in Educational Productivity* 5 (1995): 27-47

Discusses issues involved in using research to influence educational policy, describes a process for analysis and decision making regarding district organization, and offers a case study of the events and problems associated with district reorganization in New York State.

Nachtigal, P. "Remapping the Terrain: School Size, Cost, and Quality." In *Source Book on School and District Size, Cost, and Quality*. Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota University, Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs; Oak Brook, IL: North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, 1992, 52-71 (ED 361 161).

Traces research showing that large schools are not necessarily more cost-effective than small schools, nor do they necessarily offer better programs of study. Argues that when small, rural schools engage in community development and community-based learning, what we are accustomed to thinking of as schooling "costs" actually become investments in the community's future.

Pittman, R. B., and Haughwout, P. "Influence of High School Size on Dropout Rate." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 9/4 (Winter 1987): 337-343.

Scrutinizes data on 744 high schools to determine the relationship among school size, school climate factors, and the dropout rate. Concluded that large size contributes to the dropout rate indirectly—but dramatically—by lowering the quality of school climate, composed of the variables of cohesion, levels of participation in school activities, interaction with faculty, and magnitude of school problems.

Raze, N. *Instructional Implications for Small Schools: A Review of the Literature*. Redwood City, CA: San Mateo County Office of Education, SMERC Information Center, February 1985 (ED 272 347).

Reviews literature on the relative merits of small and large elementary schools, concluding that, overall, small schools are more desirable, not only in rural settings, but in suburban and urban locales as well. Cites schooling practices that are particularly suited to small school environments, including multiage grouping, team teaching, experiential learning, and parent participation.

Robertson, P. *Reinventing the High School: The Coalition Campus School Project in New York City*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA, April 1995.

Discusses the Coalition Campus School Project, which has begun eleven new, small high schools in New York City. Provides data showing that these schools are appreciably lowering their costs by using staff differently than large schools do. Argues that the ultimate cost to society of operating small schools is probably far lower than operating large ones. This is because the proven positive effects of small schools on students extend into adulthood, increasing their productivity and reducing the likelihood that they will be burdensome to society.

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Robinson-Lewis, G. *Summative Evaluation of the School-Within-A-School (SWAS) Program: 1988-1989, 1989-1990, 1990-1991*. Kansas City, MO: Kansas City School District, August 1991 (ED 346 203).

Presents findings emerging from an evaluation of the Kansas City, Missouri SWAS program for at-risk students in grades 7 and 9. Compared with their performance prior to program participation, SWAS student had higher ITBS scores, high grades, and better attendance. Recommendations for future operations are included.

Rogers, R. G. "Is Bigger Better? Fact or Fad Concerning School District Organization." *ERS Spectrum* 5/4 (Fall 1987): 36-39.

Challenges Illinois State Board of Education's conclusion that large schools offer a better and broader education than small schools. Examines data from small schools in 34 Illinois districts to determine the relationship between secondary school size and curriculum, costs, extracurricular participation, college attendance and success, and dropout rates. Findings in all areas favor small high schools.

Rutter, R. A. *Effects of School as a Community*. Madison, WI: National Center on Effective Secondary Schools, 1988 (ED 313 470).

Identifies qualities of conventional, large secondary schools that make them unsuitable for meeting the needs of at-risk students. Examines more and less successful alternative secondary programs and identifies the qualities of those that are enabling at-risk young people to succeed. Important differences relate to the interpersonal support and individualized attention that are possible in smaller learning environments.

Schoggen, P., and Schoggen, M. "Student Voluntary Participation and High School Size." *Journal of Educational Research* 81/5 (May/June 1988): 288-293.

Examines the relationship between high school size and student participation in voluntary extracurricular activities by reviewing yearbook information on over 10,000 seniors in nonurban settings in New York state. Corroborated results of earlier studies that revealed much higher levels of participation in smaller schools.

Simmons, R. G. "Social Transition and Adolescent Development." *New Directions for Child Development* 37 (Fall 1987): 33-61.

Cites research on the events and particular stresses of adolescent development, especially as they affect disadvantaged students. Discusses adolescent development in relation to research on school structures and sizes. Recommends that young adolescents attend smaller schools—or, if they attend larger schools, that they be placed in "smaller, stable, intimate subgroup environments within the school."

Smith, D. T., and DeYoung, A. J. "Big School vs. Small School: Conceptual, Empirical, and Political Perspectives on the Re-emerging Debate." *Journal of Rural and Small Schools* (Winter 1988): 2-11.

Restates the arguments that have been used in support of consolidating small, predominantly rural schools into larger units, and cites research findings demonstrating that the case for consolidation is unsound. Identifies a range of small-school and -district advantages similar to those cited in other research investigations.

Smith, G. R., and Gregory, T. B. *Major Contrasts in the Social Climates of Two High Schools in the Same Town*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Washington, DC, April 1987.

Uses a climate assessment instrument, a series of in-depth interviews, and data on student performance to identify differences between a comprehensive high school with 1,000 students and an alternative school with 175 students. The alternative school's teachers and students were

much more satisfied than those in the large school and their sense of community was much stronger. The alternative school's students also exhibited higher achievement test scores.

Smith, G. R.; Gregory, T. B.; and Pugh, R. C. "Meeting Student Needs: Evidence for the Superiority of Alternative Schools." *Phi Delta Kappan* 62/8 (April 1981): 561-564.

Investigates the relative opinions of comprehensive and alternative school students and teachers as to how well their schools meet the students' needs in the areas of security, social relationships, esteem (expectations of success), and self-actualization. Alternative schools received much higher ratings than comprehensive schools by both students and teachers, with school size being a "potentially confounding variable" rather than a clear cause of the differences.

Stockard, J., and Mayberry, M. "Resources and School and Classroom Size." Chapter 3 in *Effective Educational Environments.* Newbury Park, CA: Corwin Press, Inc., 1992, 40-58.

Summarizes key documents from the school size literature, ranging from James Conant's *The American High School Today* to the present. Concludes that some of the assumptions supporting the move to larger and larger high schools are inaccurate and cites research findings in support of small schools and districts.

Stolp, S. "Every School a Community: The Academic Value of Strong Social Bonds Among Staff and Students." *OSSC Bulletin* 39/1 (October 1995): entire issue.

Cites research and case studies demonstrating the beneficial effects of school environments characterized by shared purpose, belongingness, mutual support, and other features of community. Notes that many of these environmental features are best achieved in small schools or small sub-units within schools.

Toenjes, L. A. *Dropout Rates in Texas School Districts: Influences of School Size and Ethnic Group.* Austin, TX: Texas Center for Educational Research, August 1989 (ED 324 783).

Studies data on the largest 21 school districts in Texas to determine the relationship of school size and ethnicity to dropout rates. Whites had the highest dropout rates (compared to blacks and Hispanics), and there was a strong positive relationship between school size and dropout rate.

Walberg, H. J. "On Local Control: Is Bigger Better?" In *Source Book on School and District Size, Cost, and Quality.* Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota University, Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs; Oak Brook, IL: North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, 1992, 118-134 (ED 361 164).

Provides data on increases in the past 50 years of school and district size, reviews literature on the effects of school and district size, and presents findings from an analysis indicating that the higher the percentage of school costs provided by the state, the lower the achievement of students in that state.

Way, J. W. *Evaluation of the School Within a School, 1984-85.* Kansas City, MO: Kansas City School District, August 1985 (287 911).

Investigates the effects of school-within-a-school programs for low-achieving ninth and tenth graders in five secondary schools. Program students compared favorably with comparison students and with their own previous performance on measures of reading achievement, academic self-concept, attitudes toward school, and discipline interruptions. Math performance was superior but not significantly so, and attendance data were confounded.

Welch, J., and McKenna, E. *SWAS: School within a School. A Middle Level Dropout Intervention Program.* North Kingstown, RI: North Kingstown Public Schools, November 1988 (ED 302 919).

Describes the SWAS program serving at-risk middle school students at Davisville

Middle School. Program students re-enter the regular Davisville program when their achievement and teacher recommendations warrant doing so. A key components is required parent involvement. During the period studied, 84 percent of participating students had improved grades, and teacher perceptions of student behavior and attitudes were positive.

Williams, D. T. *The Dimensions of Education: Recent Research on School Size*. Working Paper Series. Clemson, SC: Clemson University, Strom Thurmond Institute of Government and Public Affairs, December 1990 (ED 347 006).

Reviews 30 research studies on school size and its relationship to other factors, such as class size and district size. Finds that large schools are not necessarily more cost-effective, nor do they necessarily provide a higher-quality education, than small schools. Quotes extensively from the studies reviewed.

General References

Alberta Department of Education. *Small School / Large School Comparative Analysis*. Edmonton, Alberta: Planning and Research Branch, Alberta Department of Education, October 1984 (ED 257 609).

Discusses the relative merits of small and large schools in Alberta, particularly in the rural communities that make up most of the province. Cites research indicating that there are no significant achievement differences, but finds that small schools are costlier. Supports the continuation of small, rural schools and cites conditions required for quality education in such settings.

Bank Street College of Education, and Public Education Association. *Making Big High Schools Smaller. A Review of the Implementation of the House Plan in New York City's Most Troubled High Schools*. New York: Bank Street College of Education; Public Education Association, January 1989 (ED 347 212).

Reviews the implementation of five ninth grade SWAS units in New York City that focus on dropout prevention. At this early stage, the report does not focus on student outcomes, but rather critiques implementation activities and makes recommendations for improvement. In general, evaluators felt that the SWAS arrangements were too similar to traditional high schools and should have more administrative support, student choice, and flexible scheduling.

Barker, B. O. *The Advantages of Small Schools*. ERIC Digest. Las Cruces, NM: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, February 1986 (ED 265 988).

Summarizes research on the advantages of small schools (defined as 300 or fewer students) in the areas of student achievement; personal relationships among students, teachers, administrators, parents, and community members; student participation in extracurricular activities; student and staff morale; feasibility of using effective instructional methods; and incidence of discipline problems.

Cawelti, G. "Restructuring Large High Schools to Personalize Learning for All." *ERS Spectrum* 11/3 (Summer 1993): 17-21.

States the generally accepted findings from the school size research—that large schools have negative effects on student attitudes, participation, and achievement. Describes the kinds of structures that are being developed in some large high schools to mitigate those effects: "house plans" or schools-within-schools, special curriculum schools, teacher-adviser programs, and block scheduling.

Cohen, B. P. *The Effects of Crowding on Human Behavior and Student Achievement in Secondary Schools*. Philadelphia, PA: Philadelphia School District, Office of Curriculum and Instruction, 1975 (ED 188 279).

Reviews research literature on the differential effects of small and large secondary schools as a prelude to presenting design ideas for an effective secondary school.

Found small schools to be superior to large ones in terms of dropouts, student interest and involvement, vandalism, absenteeism, achievement, leadership development and sense of identity.

Conway, G. E. *Small Scale and School Culture: The Experience of Private Schools*. Charleston, WV: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, November 1994 (ED 376 996).

Examines school size in relation to educational quality and school culture in private schools. Small size enables private schools to establish shared purposes, personal loyalties, and common sentiments that are often absent from large public schools.

Edington, E. D., and Martellaro, H. C. *Variables Affecting Academic Achievement in New Mexico Schools*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA, April 1984 (ED 271 267).

Investigates the relationship between school size and achievement—both with and without considering the influence of other variables—in New Mexico schools over a four-year period. This reports on the same study as Edington and Martellaro (1989-90), above.

Fowler, W. J., Jr. *What Do We Know about School Size? What Should We Know?* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA, April 1992 (ED 347 675).

Reviews research on the relationship between secondary school size and other variables such as curricular offerings and the student outcomes of achievement attitudes, extracurricular participation, and college behavior. Research indicates that small schools—those with no more than 400 students—produce more desirable outcomes in all of these areas than large schools.

Green, G., and Stevens, W. "What Research Says about Small Schools." *The Rural Educator* 10/1 (Fall 1988): 9-14.

Reviews research literature on the effects of school size on levels of student participation in school-related activities and student achievement. Concludes that students in small schools exhibit academic performance at least equal to, and sometimes higher than, those from larger schools and that their levels of participation are considerably higher.

Gregory, T. B., and Smith, G. R. "The Case for Small High Schools." In *High Schools as Communities: The Small School Reconsidered*. Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa, 1987, 68-85 (ED 278 518).

Summarizes research pointing to the superiority of small high schools over large ones. Findings concern costs, curricular richness, and benefits accruing to teachers and students.

Henderson, H., and Raywid, M. A. "'Small' Revolution in New York City." *Journal of Negro Education* 63/1 (1994): 28-45.

Discusses the development of several dozen new alternative high schools in New York City established largely in response to research indicating that smaller schools serve students—and especially disadvantaged students—better than larger, more compartmentalized and bureaucratized schools.

Howley, C. "Literature Review." In *Sizing up Schooling: A West Virginia Analysis and Critique*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV, 1996.

Reviews the literature on school size and concludes that size, rather than being a mere "container" for other variables, is a key structural variable in its own right. Asserts that school size interacts with SES in such a way that high- and low-SES student populations will be affected differently by the size of school they attend.

Howley, C. B. Personal communication, March 21, 1996.

Calls attention, in a letter accompanying his review draft of the present paper, to

the fact that the research on small vs. large schools is more extensive and conclusive than that on SWAS plans. Remarks on the necessity for the SWAS to be a separate entity from the other school(s) in the same building.

Howley, C. B. "Synthesis of the Effects of School and District Size: What Research Says About Achievement in Small Schools and School Districts." *Journal of Rural and Small Schools* 4/1 (Fall 1989): 2-12.

Summarizes the reasoning behind the large-scale school consolidation movement of this century, cites early research on the effects of school size, explains the superiority of more recent research methods, shares the results of methodologically sound school size research, and discusses the implications of these findings for planners. Finds small schools more beneficial to students than large schools in a variety of ways.

Huling, L. "How School Size Affects Student Participation, Alienation." *NASSP Bulletin* 64/438 (October 1980): 13-18.

Reviews research on the relationship of high school size to student participation in cocurricular activities and to student alienation. Reports that large size correlates negatively to participation and positively to alienation, especially for "marginal" students. Recommends that educators and board members consider these findings along with academics, cost, and convenience when making decisions related to school size.

Kearney, J. M. *The Advantages of Small Rural Schools*. Final Report to the Idaho Rural School Association. Moscow, ID: University of Idaho, College of Education, February 1994 (ED 373 934).

Reviews research on small and rural secondary schools, discusses the characteristics of rural education, analyzes Idaho high school data, and presents arguments for and against consolidation of rural schools. Among the findings are that small schools produce achievement outcomes superior to those of larger schools and that minority and at-risk students benefit the most from small school environments.

Lomotey, K., and Swanson, A. D. "Urban and Rural Schools Research: Implications for School Governance." *Education and Urban Society* 21/4 (August 1989): 436-454.

Compares rural schools, typical urban schools, and effective urban schools on many characteristics, including size, nature of student population, achievement, school culture, discipline, administrative leadership, teaching staff, curriculum, and others. Finds that many of the virtues of rural schools are related to their relatively small size.

Lund, D. R.; Smith, J. A.; and Glennon, M. L. "What's Happening in...East Williston, New York?" *Phi Delta Kappan* 64/7 (March 1983): 503-504..

Traces the history of the school-within-a-school at Wheatley School, an alternative secondary program featuring shared decision making, nontraditional teaching methods, and student self-evaluation. Identifies problems encountered, outcomes and recommendations for improvement.

Martellaro, H. C., and Edington, E. *Relationship of School Enrollment Size to Academic Achievement in New Mexico*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Rural Education Association, Manhattan, KS, October 1983 (ED 234 956).

Reports on the same research study as that summarized in Edington and Martellaro (1984), above.

Meier, D. *The Power of their Ideas. Lessons for America from a Small School in Harlem*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1995.

Describes the history and operation of the highly successful Central Park East, comprised of four public schools which, collectively, serve students in grades K-12, most of whom are low-SES African Americans and Hispanics. The author draws from her CPE experience to argue for a

kind of school reform in which all children would attend small schools.

Mergendoller, J. R. *To Facilitate or Impede? The Impact of Selected Organizational Features of Secondary Schools on Adolescent Development. Ecological Perspectives for Successful Schooling Practice.* San Francisco: Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development; Madison, WI: Wisconsin Center for Education Research, 1982 (ED 233 501).

Presents a theory of adolescent development and reviews research findings in light of the author's theory. Argues that the greater participation levels in smaller schools benefit students' development, because they are able to experience multiple roles, feel needed, and develop friendships with fellow participants.

Nickle, M. N.; Flynt, F. C.; Poynter, S. D.; and Rees, J. A., Jr. "Does it Make a Difference if You Change the Structure? School-within-a-School." *Phi Delta Kappan* 72/2 (October 1990): 148-152.

Describes a SWAS program developed by four teachers in a Springdale, Arkansas high school. Featuring an interdisciplinary program, flexible scheduling, and common planning periods, the program became part of the Coalition of Essential Schools. Students surveyed identified several reasons for preferring the SWAS to "regular" school—less pressure, taking more responsibility for their learning, interrelatedness of learning content, and relevance of the instructional program to "real life."

Ornstein, A. C. "School Size and Effectiveness: Policy Implications." *The Urban Review* 22/3 (September 1990): 239-245.

Gives a brief overview of research findings on the relationship between school size (elementary and secondary) and variables such as cost, curricular richness, and affective characteristics of students. Identifies appropriate elementary school size as 200-600 and appropriate secondary school size as 300-1000.

Oxley, D. "Organizing Schools into Small Units: Alternatives to Homogeneous Grouping." *Phi Delta Kappan* 75/7 (March 1994): 521-526.

Cites research findings about the negative effects of large high schools and the practice of academic tracking as a lead-in to a discussion of the virtues of small units of heterogeneously grouped students at the secondary level. Discusses two schools—one German and one American—which are structured in this way and which focus on successfully educating all of their students.

Parrett, W. H. "Experiences of Alternative Secondary Schools Can Help Rural Schools." *Action in Teacher Education* 4/4 (Winter 1982): 45-49.

Identifies educational practices that have proved effective in alternative schools and recommends that rural schools, which because of their small size can also implement these practices, review and make use of them. Among practices cited are use of adapted materials, attention to students' personal issues, community learning experiences, soliciting student input for learning experiences, and individualizing learning activities.

Piper, P. S. "Schools-Within-A-School: The Kapa'a Elementary School Model." *Educational Innovations in the Pacific* 2/1 (September 1994). (ED 375 469).

Discusses the development and implementation of several subject-area school-within-a-school structures—those focusing on math, science, creative and critical thinking, technology, language arts, etc. Though initial parent, staff, and student attitudes were positive, several problems and their proposed solutions are identified. Recommendations for successful schools-within-schools are included.

Ramirez, A. "Size, Cost, and Quality of Schools and School Districts: A Question of Context." In *Source Book on School and District Size, Cost, and Quality.* Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota University, Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public

Affairs; Oak Brook, IL: North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, 1992, 72-93 (ED 361 162).

Reviews literature on the relationship between school and district size on one hand, and course offerings, teacher qualifications, student behavior, student participation, and school climate on the other. Concludes that size per se is unrelated to student achievement and that the organization of classrooms—"the basic unit of contact"—is the key element of a schools' success or failure.

Raywid, M. A. "Family Choice Arrangements in Public Schools: A Review of the Literature." *Review of Educational Research* 55/4 (Winter 1985): 435-467.

Reviews the history of family choice opportunities in public schools and discusses the range of motives behind families' exercise of school choice. Describes several choice models, including alternative schools and SWAS plans.

Rogers, B. "Small Is Beautiful." In *Source Book on School and District Size, Cost, and Quality*. Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota University, Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs; Oak Brook, IL: North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, 1992, 96-116 (ED 361 163).

Cites research findings regarding the advantages of small secondary schools and illustrates these with anecdotal reports gathered from participating schools in the Coalition for Essential Schools. Discusses reasons the vision of the large, "comprehensive" high school is unsuitable for meeting the needs of today's students.

Sergiovanni, T. J. *Organizations or Communities? Changing the Metaphor Changes the Theory*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Atlanta, GA, April 1993 (ED 376 008).

Argues that we should regard schools as communities, rather than regarding them as organizations. Because communities focus more on the personal and interpersonal than do organizations, this shift brings with it several implications, including the need to move away from bureaucratic authority, change school structures, and decrease school size.

Sparkes, R. L., and McIntire, W. G. "Community and School Size as Factors in the Job Satisfaction of Principals in Newfoundland and Labrador." *Journal of Rural and Small Schools* 2/3 (Spring 1988): 11-15.

Reports findings from a survey of over 400 principals in Newfoundland and Labrador on measures of job satisfaction, and correlates these with school and community size. Principals of large schools (those with 16 or more teachers) in large communities (those with populations over 1,500) exhibited greater professional satisfaction than those in smaller schools and/or communities. Recommendations include better recruitment procedures and professional development activities for principals of small schools.

Stevens, N. G., and Peltier, G. L. "A Review of Research on Small-School Student Participation in Extracurricular Activities." *Journal of Research in Rural Education* 10/2 (Fall 1994): 116-120.

Cites research on the beneficial effects of attending small schools, including greater participation in extracurricular activities, leadership opportunities, learning motivation, and feelings of being needed and valued. Effects of greater participation in school activities were found to be long-lasting.

Swanson, A. D. "The Matter of Size: A Review of the Research on Relationships between School and District Size, Pupil Achievement and Cost." *Research in Rural Education* 5/2 (Spring 1988): 1-8.

Reviews research on the relative merits of small and large schools and school districts, giving consideration to both the achievement and affective qualities outcomes of students in different settings. Findings include that smaller schools foster more positive student attitudes and interpersonal relationships and are not so deficient in their range of curricular offerings as was once believed.

Walberg, H. J., and Walberg, H. J., III. "Losing Local Control." *Educational Researcher* 23/5 (June/July 1994): 19-26.

Examines relationships in 38 states among school size, district size, percentage of schooling costs paid by the state, percentage paid locally, and student achievement. Smaller schools exhibit higher achievement than larger schools at the secondary and particularly the elementary level. States in which states provide a smaller percentage of costs and local government pays a larger percentage have higher achievement than states in which the reverse condition prevails.

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SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT RESEARCH SERIES
"Research You Can Use"

Snapshot #37

Providing Integrated Services in an Inner-City School

The Family Academy
New York, New York

Joan Shaughnessy

Research Findings

In the heart of the Harlem neighborhood of New York City, a small public elementary school named the Family Academy has designed an approach that successfully integrates social services with academic learning. The school raises funds that pay for additional staff and supplemental learning experiences, so that it can address problems that are usually beyond the purview of educators. By creating a community, and then by addressing the basic needs of the families in this community, the school has been able to provide an enriched atmosphere of learning for its students.

The research-supported practices that are exemplified in the Family Academy have been summarized in the Northwest Regional Education Laboratory's *Effective Schooling Practices: A Research Synthesis / 1995 Update* (Cotton 1995). These include:

2.7.3 School Leaders and Staff Collaborate with Community Agencies to Support Families with Urgent Health and/or Social Service Needs.

School leaders and staff:

a. Learn about the array of medical and social service providers in the community and how to access them.

d. Assist needy families to access appropriate health and social service facilities and providers in the community.

e. Identify needy children and families early in the children's school experience and work with community agencies on prevention and intervention activities.

2.8.1 Administrators and Teachers Involve Parents and Community Members in Supporting the Instructional Program.

Administrators and teachers:

a. Communicate repeatedly to parents that their involvement can greatly enhance their children's school performance, regardless of their own level of education.

c. Strongly encourage parents to become involved in activities that support the instructional program.

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d. Provide parents with information and techniques for helping students learn (e.g., training sessions, handbooks, make-and-take workshops, etc.).

e. Establish and maintain regular, frequent home-school communications. This includes providing parents with information about student progress and calling attention to any areas of difficulty.

2.8.2 Administrators and Teachers Involve Parents and Community Members in School Governance.

Administrators and teachers:

b. Communicate clearly to parents the procedures for involvement and use the procedures consistently.

c. Engage parent and community participation on school-based management teams.

f. Work with cultural minority parents and community members to help children cope with any differences in norms noted between the home and the school.

g. Involve parents and community members in decision making regarding school governance and school improvement efforts.

h. Monitor and evaluate parent/community involvement activities and continually work to keep participation effective.

i. Publish indicators of school quality and provide them to parents and community members periodically to foster communication and stimulate public action.

Context

The Family Academy serves 250 children in grades K-4 in the Harlem neighborhood of New York City. It is housed in a three-story concrete slab monolith that has a small, poorly equipped asphalt "yard" encased in a chain link fence. The first two stories of the building contain one of the city's regular schools and a Head Start Program, while the third floor houses the academy.

Enrollment statistics show that the academy's population is comparable to other Harlem neighborhood schools. Eighty-five percent of the families in this school are on some form of public assistance, and more than 40 percent of the academy's families live in public housing units. The majority of the children are members of minority groups; most come from African American and Latin American cultures.

The founders of the Family Academy chose to serve this population in a unique way. Their dream was to start with a small educational community and to nurture it as it grew. In the academy's first year (1991-92), the school selected just 50 kindergarten children and then continued to add another 50 kindergartners each of the subsequent years. The selection criterion for applicants has been that the families live within walking distance of the school. From that pool of interested families, 50 kindergartners are chosen randomly each year. To prevent the separation of siblings, families with children already enrolled in the school are given first preference when selections are made.

The school receives standard funding from the New York City Board of Education but supplements those dollars with grant money from corporations, individuals or charitable foundations. With these dollars, the academy runs additional programs and has designed a support structure for the entire family unit. Family services are housed under the academy's roof, providing a broad range of assistance for family problems on site. The academy also helps families to access an even broader array of services from local community organizations.

School Philosophy

The Family Academy is dedicated to ensuring that inner city children receive the same opportunity to learn as children in more affluent school settings. To that end, the school creates a stimulating and nurturing environment for its students and extends the school day and year to provide plenty of time

for learning. Instead of ending at 3:00 p.m., the Family Academy classes run until 5:00 p.m., adding valuable hours for classroom instruction. The school also continues most of the summer, scheduling only a short vacation period. This means that students' growth and development does not lose ground during summer months. Academy staff also provide enriching experiences in music, drama and physical education during the summer.

School staff operate from several key convictions about the root causes of educational failure in this community. They believe that students' learning falters when they are distracted by health problems, family struggles, isolation, personal anonymity, poor language skills, or other disadvantages. Any or all of these hamper learning and communication. The academy's founders believed that despite these many problems, students can excel academically if a responsive and sustainable support structure makes learning possible. The academy provides organizational mechanisms that address critical family and health issues, while at the same time enabling teachers to focus on classroom instruction. The school emphasizes a challenging, comprehensive curriculum that fosters language skills and critical thinking.

The academy's curriculum and its parent classes are geared to help both adults and children in this community develop their language capacity. Staff recognize that oral communication may initially be difficult and uncomfortable for both the parents and the children, but they also know that with support and encouragement, the parents and their children can improve their communication skills and broaden their horizons via both the written and spoken word. This is reflected throughout the school. For example, the strong schoolwide emphasis on language arts is evident in the library, where books are chosen to promote and respect the students' self-concepts, and also to provide examples of successful conflict resolution.

Effective Structures of the Family Academy

What makes the Family Academy successful? Three unique features stand out: social support structures supplementing the instructional program, support for staff, and the small school size.

Social Support Structures

To ensure that there are enough specialists to supplement the educational mission of the school by serving social needs, a Child and Family Service Center operates at the school. This center includes a family worker, a learning specialist, a child psychologist, and a college intern to work with children when teachers need a break from class.

Having a building-based social worker is a crucial component of this school. Her responsibilities include conducting all family intake interviews and coordinating social services for the families. She knows the problems of all families served by the academy, and she carries a beeper with her at all times so as to be accessible to the families 24 hours a day. She maintains communication with families to minimize situations that could interfere with learning. The problems she addresses include health and housing problems, interpersonal family struggles, and legal issues.

Having specialized help to work with troubled families means that school staff can intensify their focus on the academic work of school. Contacts made by staff of the Child and Family Service Center make it possible for academy staff to learn about family concerns. The extra staff in the center focus on solving children's problems immediately instead of passing these on to another agency.

Other support structures back up the instructional work of the school. For example there are two staff members working on fundraising and public relations with funding agencies. Their success means that students and staff receive additional help from interns, businesses and community volunteers. This outreach increases adult contacts and personalized attention for all students.

Support Provided to Staff

Because the Family Academy is part of the public school system, it recruits its staff from a pool of certificated applicants. Once staff are chosen, academy personnel orient them to the school's unique way of operating. By providing additional support for the staff in the form of

professional development, additional volunteers, and college interns in the classroom, the school makes it possible for teachers to focus on student learning and to work more effectively. It is particularly important to value and support the staff in a school like this, because the days here stretch well beyond the 8:00 a.m.-to-3:00 p.m., September-to-June length of the normal school day and school year. Teachers who expect to leave the school building at 3:00 o'clock would find themselves out of sync with the school philosophy. At the same time, there is a recognition that academy staff have full lives beyond their work, and they are asked to share this with the families in the school. Staff share their hobbies, their interests, and their skills, which makes it possible for them to be an integral part of the school's year-round community.

School Size

Another goal is to build the self-esteem of community members, and here, the small, intimate environment of the school plays an important role. Urban anonymity can threaten self-concept, so the school has created a place where all members of the community are known and cared about. Staff at the school know all children and all parents by their first names and bring personal touches to their interactions with families. Staff greet all members of the family warmly when students are being dropped off or picked up. They invite whole families to get involved in the school and then provide a welcoming atmosphere.

Personal contact turns out to be a great contributor to community development. Parents are more likely to participate in school-related events when they are acquainted with academy staff, and students respond better when school staff have a personal relationship with their whole family. By consciously designing a system that fosters a sense of community ownership, the academy draws more parents into the school. Over time these adults join together through a common commitment to improving student performance.

Because the school started small, it was possible to establish a norm of honest and direct communication. Issues are dealt with directly, and adults and children to learn to "be straight" with one another. The longer days mean that staff are not rushed and can take the extra time to foster open communication with and among the students. Staff model conflict resolution in their relationships with each other and with the children. Children are frequently asked to "look me in the eye" when they are talking to an adult and are prevented from retreating into a passive stance by staff's persistent—but caring—probes to learn about students' personal problems. Academy staff have learned that being insistent pays off; problems and incidents that are ignored surface repeatedly until they are addressed. Staff approach these matter-of-factly, bringing their interpersonal skills to their relationships with each other, the children, and their parents, and model a sense of community by revealing their whole person to each other.

A small school is a safer place to share personal interests and passions. The extended day and extended year mean that work at the school is a major part of life; in the intimate environment, staff make their long days meaningful and personally relevant.

Program Features

Family Intake Interviews and Student Assessment

Intake interviews are conducted for all new kindergarten students entering the school. These interviews take from thirty minutes to two hours. During the interview, the social worker completes a family profile, describing the medical history of all family members, housing needs, and child welfare concerns. To promote a sense of trust, parents receive a tour of the file storage area and learn about the security measures used to maintain confidentiality. The academy warns parents that the interview might be uncomfortable, but that the social worker can provide better service if the family situation is explained in full. Parents are asked to sign consent forms that will make it easier for the social worker to serve as an advocate on their behalf.

Coordination of Services

At the Family Academy, the school becomes the introductory point of contact for coordinated or expanded services for families. In the academy's neighborhood, most families receive

piecemeal services provided by local walk-up clinics. The typical Harlem clinic is not equipped or funded to address chronic or complicated problems that need long-term solutions, such as in-depth counseling or extended care. Instead, a person needing service typically arrives with a specific acute problem, and that emergency is dealt with on the spot.

The Family Academy, through its social worker, seeks ongoing services for the whole family. It coordinates management of the family's needs and locates the most comprehensive services available. Because of the social worker's intervention, health services are offered to both adults and children simultaneously in a coordinated fashion. This often means that the family must travel beyond their own neighborhood to a new provider with specialized services. If this is the case, the school makes these arrangements, too. By serving as the coordinator of family cases, the academy enhances communication and ensures that pertinent information will be shared across service providers.

In addition, having an on-site social service team ensures that problems are assessed quickly and solutions are sought. Members of the entire social service team are available to make the family's contact with service providers go smoothly. They may help out by providing a case history to the agency prior to an appointment or by educating the family so parents bring needed materials to an appointment. By ensuring that the family has the necessary paperwork, the precise name for a medical condition, and/or the description of a problem identified during assessment, the experience at the doctor's office becomes less traumatic for the family.

Facilitation of Services

Not only are the services located by school staff, but having extra support staff means that the school can make appointments for services and help family members get to these appointments. The school staff described a recent example: When a student's health problem was noted, and high-quality services were located in a neighborhood a cab ride away from the school, the girl's mother resisted taking the girl to her appointment. So, a school staff member transported the girl to her appointment a few times, each time inviting the mother to go along. At first, the mother was anxious and unwilling to ride along, but after a few doctor visits, she agreed to accompany her daughter to the doctor's office. The staff member was able to talk with the mother, encourage and support her through the unfamiliar and uncomfortable experience of going to the doctor's office. After a few of these accompanied trips, the mother became ready to take the girl herself, without the assistance of the staff member.

Family Academy staff consider helping families to use resources appropriately to be part of their responsibility. Helping a mother gain communication skills so she can work with a health care professional is part of the school's domain. By accompanying the staff member, the mother could observe the staff's relationship with the doctor and slowly learn to trust the system.

Working on these problems takes a lot of commitment and perseverance. In one conversation, a staff member said that many of the schools efforts are fueled by the "f" word; "f" at this school stands for "follow-through." Once they initiate a set of inquiries, staff members do not allow themselves to be discouraged by bureaucracy. They continue to call and to nag until one of two things happen: either they develop a personal relationship with agency social workers and receive personal attention, or they gain a reputation for being "pests." In either case, local agency staff "know we will not go away," and have begun to respond to Family Academy requests.

The Family Academy also uses networking to learn about all available services. One example is the academy's dealings with Child Welfare. Recommendations made by Child Welfare social workers vary; not all arrange for the comprehensive service for families. For example, Child Welfare can provide a homemaker to a family; this person helps with laundry, advises about nutritional needs, etc., but some welfare workers were not prescribing this service. Once this was recognized, the academy decided to pressure Child Welfare to recommend the most appropriate services for academy families.

Focus on Teaching Social Skills

In addition to academic instruction in the classroom, Family Academy students are

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specifically taught many interpersonal coping mechanisms, such as using words to express feelings and finding acceptable ways to resolve conflicts. For example, when any kind of argument or controversy breaks out among the students, any adult (administrator, teacher, or college intern) in the vicinity steps in and tells the children that this kind of behavior is not acceptable at school. Adults ask the student to use language to talk about the conflict and/or offer a solution.

Parental Involvement in School Learning

Parental involvement is a crucial aspect of the Family Academy program, and many approaches have been used to encourage their participation in the learning community. Learning opportunities are provided to parents in four ways. First, classes are held to assist parents in curriculum-related topics such as math instruction or language arts. The most popular course offered at the school has been an African American literature course.

Second, materials that can guide parents are made available for parental checkout in the small school library. When parents drop by the library (which is open at the beginning and end of each day), the librarian wheels a cart of parental books out from behind the desk and describes the available books to parents. He collects materials of interest to parents at the local library and keeps them informed about local events. Thirty to forty parents use the library services regularly.

A third way that parents are engaged is through direct one-on-one consultation. Staff meet with parents and hear about the specific concerns or confusion parents are experiencing about ways to support their children's learning. Then staff explain the kind of reinforcement that parents can provide—e.g., phonics practice at home, recognizing letters of the alphabet, or understanding uses of arithmetic when shopping at the store. All of these strategies are explained directly to parents at teachable moments.

A fourth way that parents receive help is during a weekly parent rap group meeting. These informal meetings help parents learn from each other and share their information about successful strategies. Parents express their concerns and problem solve with one another.

Staff believe that the one-on-one consultation and the parent rap group time have proven to be the most successful ways to gain parental support at home. Oral communication in an informal setting seems to provide the best environment for helping parents learn skills that promote student learning.

Parental skills are tapped and their ability to organize and manage social events are encouraged to provide positive and well-rounded community events for the children that support academic instruction.

The school's effort to communicate with parents is noteworthy. The parent newsletter is written in simple sentences—with no jargon or educational "double-speak." The newsletter could be read by a third grader and is laid out in a user-friendly format. Important information is highlighted.

Community Problem Solving

Parents often find that the problems in the wider community influence how they function and the kinds of opportunities that they can provide to their children. For example, the parent rap group determined that it is often unsafe for parents to take their children to the local park on Saturdays because the park is littered with dirty needles, broken glass and used condoms. The parents felt they were often held hostage in their own homes because they could not take their children out for healthy exercise on the weekends. A group of mothers strategized a solution: early on Saturday morning, two of the mothers drop their children off with another family and head over to the park to clean it up. They scour the playground area for a half-hour and remove any dangerous objects. Then the other families in the group bring all the children to the park to play. The mothers have an opportunity to chat with one another and to form the kind of connections needed to sustain a sense of community.

Family Academy In Action

During each quarter of the year, the school holds a festival which supports and promotes a theme that is currently being taught. For example, in the spring of 1995, the entire school focused on multicultural issues. Because the community itself is multicultural,

this event was a excellent opportunity for parent involvement. The school council requested that parents help organize and orchestrate many of the activities during this multicultural experience. Each classroom studied one country and prepared an "experience" for the other students in the school to attend.

For their part, parents orchestrated a theme-related Spring Fest in the park. This day included ethnic foods, music and dance from other countries, including a meringue dance group and a Capoeira demonstration (Capoeira is a dance form with African-Brazilian roots that combines sport, dance, traditional instruments, singing and martial arts). Parents made the arrangements for the food, served as the seamstresses for the dancers' costumes, and located a storyteller for the event.

Classroom Experiences

A visit to Angel Gonzalez's classroom reveals what a school day looks like to a first grader. With its cubbies for each student and its class space divided into learning stations, this room seems much like the first grade classrooms in more affluent neighborhoods. The environment is stimulating: art posters, lists of common words on colorful construction paper, and laminated pages from picture books all embellish the room. The first-graders have just completed a unit on architecture and are now using what they have learned to create a model of Old San Juan in Puerto Rico as part of the schoolwide theme of multicultural awareness.

Today the lesson includes a discussion of maps. The students have a chance to look at a floor plan of the Museum of Natural History and a subway map of New York City. The first graders are brimming with observations from their own experience and with questions. The discussion shifts to treasure maps and pirates who marked with an "x" the location of hidden treasure.

Getting Results: Data on Family Academy Success

Collecting data showing that the school makes a difference is an important issue for the academy, and staff have developed a variety of ways of studying its impact. For example, the school monitors the amount of homework that is done and handed in to the teachers in the school. These data show a steady growth in the amount of work that students do outside of school. In kindergarten 36 percent of the students turn in their homework, and in first grade 65 percent do so. By the second grade, 83 percent of the students are completing and submitting their homework assignments.

School records show that the academy's emphasis on language and literacy is taking hold. Over 95 percent of the families check out books from the school's library. In fact, with only 200 children enrolled in the school, 10,000 books were checked out over the course of the year. This number only includes the books that children check out themselves, not the added books that the librarian circulates to the classroom for teacher use. Not only are books frequently checked out, they are also treated with respect. According to the librarian, there is less vandalism and book damage in this school than in comparable schools in the area.

One of the significant outcomes of increasing parental involvement is improved commitment to getting students to attend school regularly. In the fall of 1994, the Family Academy had the best attendance of any school in district #3—an area that includes all schools in the upper west side of Manhattan. In September, 98 percent of the students attended, and in October the attendance rate was 96 percent. Over the course of the full school year, third grade students averaged only 7.5 days absent.

It is unusual for a school to gather as much data as the Family Academy has, and even more unusual for a school to make specific plans based on analysis of the data. For example, the school staff have learned that the oldest group of students in the building (currently fourth graders) have not shown the language achievement evident in later classes. To address this situation, the school has now implemented a special program with half of the fourth graders to ensure that they are up to grade level in language skills. The school anticipates that additional data will be available in the coming months.

More information about this school's program is available by contacting Christina Giammalva, Family Academy, 220 West 121st Street, New York, New York, 10027. The academy's phone number is (212) 749-3558.

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January 1996

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT RESEARCH SERIES
"Research You Can Use"

Snapshot #38

Integrating Middle School Curriculum Around Real-World Issues

Waldo Middle School
Salem, Oregon

James W. Kushman

Research Findings

Engaging students in real-world problem solving as they acquire the skills and knowledge needed for success in work and life is as important for middle school students as it is for those in high school. Among the many personal transitions middle school students make is that they begin to think about school as preparation for life. Helping students see the connections between school and life can be accomplished by an interdisciplinary curriculum rooted in real-world topics that are exciting and timely. Learning can be further enhanced through a performance orientation that allows students to practice and be assessed on important work and life skills. This approach represents a blending of curricular and instructional practices that research has shown increase student engagement and learning. According to *Effective School Practices: A Research Synthesis / 1995 Update* (Cotton 1995), these practices include:

1.1.2 Teachers provide instruction that integrates traditional subjects as appropriate.

Teachers

a. Use thematic units as the organizing principle for instruction in agreed-upon areas.
c. Engage students in projects requiring knowledge and skill across several traditional content areas.
d. Make use of other resources, including hands-on material, in addition to textbooks.
f. Use performance assessments that allow students to demonstrate knowledge and skills from several traditional subject-matter areas.

1.3.7 Teachers integrate workplace readiness skills into content-area instruction.

Teachers

b. Focus on developing the higher-order skills required in the modern workplace—problem-solving and decision-making skills, learning strategies, and creative thinking.
e. Assign tasks like those carried out by people in real work settings.
f. Function as facilitators and coaches rather than lecturers or order-givers, giving older students much of the responsibility for their own learning.
j. Select workplace problems to illustrate how basic academic skills are applied in real-world settings.

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1.6.2 Teachers make use of alternative assessments as well as traditional tests.

Teachers

c. Begin by using alternative assessments on a small scale. They recognize that the best assessments are developed over time and with repeated use.

2.1.3 Administrators and teachers integrate the curriculum, as appropriate.

Administrators

a. Explore the feasibility of integrating traditional subject-area content around broad themes, and identify areas where this approach is appropriate.

c. Make other resources available for use in integrated curriculum units in addition to textbooks.

d. Pursue curriculum integration gradually, so that staff can make adjustments, gain feelings of ownership, and evaluate the success of each effort.

2.1.4 Administrators and teachers provide computer technology for instructional support and workplace simulation.

Administrators

c. Provide computer activities that simulate workplace conditions and tasks to build employability skills for all students.

d. Make use of computers and word processing software to foster the development of writing skills.

Situation

Waldo Middle School is located in the capital city of Salem, Oregon. The sprawling blue-gray and red-brick building is "home" to just over 1,000 students in grades 6-8, about one-quarter of whom are Hispanic or members of other minority groups. The school is nestled within a residential neighborhood of older homes, and the portable classrooms behind the school reflect a growing and changing population. One significant change is an increasing number of poor and minority students—a change that will accelerate as school boundary shifts raise the percentage of students on free and reduced lunch from about 60 percent to an expected 75 percent.

Waldo is part of the largely urban Salem-Keizer School District, which has been engaged in the process of school and districtwide improvement for the past decade. The district operates from a conviction that all students can learn successfully and has established a set of 21st century student learning goals that are well reflected in Waldo's own philosophy and goals. A dominant part of Waldo's approach is to provide students with an education that is tied to their lives and life skills, including the application and use of technology. The school boasts that over 90 percent of its students work with technology as part of their instructional program.

Waldo has been committed to the process of school improvement for some time, beginning with its implementation of the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory's Onward to Excellence (OTE) program about eight years ago. Through the OTE process, the school formed a school improvement leadership team, developed profiles of student performance, set improvement goals based on profile data, and used research-based practices to improve learning for all students. While Waldo no longer views itself as an "OTE school," it has internalized many of the OTE principles and practices, including reviewing research, profiling student performance, and making use of site-based leadership that involves staff and community members.

Waldo and the entire Salem-Keizer District, have been revising curriculum, instruction, and assessment in response to Oregon's sweeping education legislation (House Bill 3565), which calls for a restructuring of schools to better prepare today's children for work and life in the 21st century. This requires rethinking curriculum and instruction so that learning is organized around application of knowledge and skills, rather than merely accumulating credits in isolated subjects and disciplines. It also necessitates more authentic, performance-based assessments around specific learning outcomes. In addition to the push from the state, the Salem-Keizer district established its own 21st century student learning goals and has been working for the

past several years to improve alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment with these goals.

Context

The seventh grade Endangered Species project at Waldo Middle School is a model of how schools can develop, experiment with, and refine a more integrated and performance-based approach to teaching and assessment, with technology at the center. Administrators and teachers at Waldo have been developing an integrated curriculum, hands-on and technology-driven instruction, community learning, and alternative assessments for several years.

The Endangered Species project is the brainchild of a highly motivated and creative teacher named Mike Weddle, but it is far from a solo performance. The project has been a true collaborative effort involving the school's leadership team, faculty members across a number of disciplines, and professional scientists and other community members who have provided input and participated directly in instruction and assessment. The project was pilot tested in the spring of 1994 and completed its first full year of implementation during the 1994-95 school year.

The project has four components, three of which have undergone considerable development. The three established components are:

1. Integrating the seventh grade curriculum in life sciences, writing, computers, math, and social studies around a contemporary, real-world issue that engages students (i.e., endangered animals).

2. Applying technology and pursuing other hands-on learning experiences in ways that relate to real problems and tasks which people face in the world of work.

3. Linking with the community to provide rich information resources, community learning, and a sense of realism to the project.

The fourth component, which is still in the experimental phase, is conducting student performance assessments in the areas of applied math and science, technology use, collaboration, and communication (speaking, writing, and visual forms).

The Endangered Species project runs for eight weeks and is offered twice per year to accommodate two groups of seventh grade students. The eight weeks are organized into a coordinated sequence of activities across a number of discipline-based courses, primarily life sciences, writing, and computers. To a lesser extent, content is also integrated into math, social science, and art courses. Students still attend their regular classes during the eight weeks, but their teachers collaborate on a sequential curriculum that begins with students learning about endangered species and conducting individual research; continues with small groups of students developing their recovery plans and multimedia presentations of the plans; and culminates in formal presentations to a panel of zoo experts and faculty, who evaluate and critique the student work.

Current Practice: The Endangered Species Project

Phase 1: Student Research and Paper

The project begins in life sciences class where students learn about endangered species—a topic which seems to excite many students because of children's natural love of animals and because it is a timely environmental issue. Students conduct individual research on a particular animal, choosing from a list of 25 endangered species. In their research, they draw from a rich set of materials and from experts in the field. Thus, a student might first gather information from the CD-ROM, *Encyclopedia of US Endangered Species;* a recent copy of the periodical, *Wildlife Conservation* (a good example of a journal that is appropriate for a seventh grade reader); and other library resources.

As the project progresses, students interact with biologists and conservationists from regional zoos and from around the country who have agreed to participate as expert resources. They communicate by voice, Internet, and in person. One group working on the Florida panther, for example, held conference calls with a leading conservation biologist in Florida, who is actively involved in saving the state's endangered panther popula-

tion. He provided information and advice as the students developed their recovery plan. Another resource is an Internet user group of conservation scientists called CONSLINK, which students can connect to via the school's computers.

An important part of the groundwork for this project was building a rich resource base, which was accomplished with a lot of effort by the lead teacher and a small external foundation grant. The resources include CDs on animals, habitats, and endangered species; conservation and nature journals that provide technical information at an appropriate level for middle-school readers; and other specialized resources which are not typically available in general school libraries. Many letters were sent and personal contacts made with zoos, wildlife parks, and leading individuals in the field to develop a network of regional and worldwide experts for the project to utilize. Without these rich resources, the course would lack the depth and realism it has achieved.

After conducting research, students are given an individual writing task as part of their English class. As they complete their initial research, each student writes a report that describes the animal, its species and family, habitat, behavior, how it became endangered, and current conservation efforts. They work with members of their group to develop and write up a recovery plan on a word processor in computer class.

One student's portfolio included a well-written piece about three single-spaced pages long with a bibliography. The English teacher requires students to stress concepts in their writing rather than facts; copying definitions or sentences from a book is not acceptable. Students need to show they understand the definitions and concepts and write in a persuasive manner with an introduction that "grabs" the reader and a strong argument for their recovery plan at the end.

While students are researching and writing during the early part of the project, they are learning about the environmental and political issues surrounding endangered species in social studies. In math, the teacher explains how probability relates to genetic variability, which is a key concept in explaining and preventing species extinction. Early in their projects, students attend a "Safari Day," in which local zoo experts visit the school and talk about animal groups and their habitats in a mini-fair format.

Phase 2: Developing a "Recovery Plan"

In the second phase of the course students work in small groups to develop a recovery plan for their endangered animal. Students self-select into these groups based on the animal of interest. This gives students choice, an important ingredient in engaged learning.

About two weeks before presentation day, student groups were observed working in their life sciences and computer classes on their recovery plans. Life sciences class was a buzz of activity, as students worked in groups of three to five individuals with a combination of excitement and anxiety as the deadline drew nearer. Groups were huddled over large sheets of butcher paper that showed lists of ideas or rough drawings of habitat theme parks for their animals. The teacher roamed from group to group asking questions about progress and about the specifics of the plan. She also prodded them to plan a timeline and a division of labor to complete the work. Students were given a worksheet list of possible tasks so that each student could sign up for one or more tasks. The list included computer tasks, such as designing a three-dimensional image of the park or an informational brochure, and non-computer tasks, such as building a real model or drawing a poster. Students must divide the work, and each person is expected to make an individual contribution to the team effort.

In the Florida panther group, students disagreed over how large the habitat should be, how much roaming range the animal needs, and how to arrange the space. One student asked the another, "What does the research say about roaming range?" At that point, the teacher came by and suggested they investigate what wildlife parks do and talked about the concept of "shift cages" which zoos sometimes use. The students decided that during their next conference call with their Florida consultant, they would ask for some expert advice. They were engaged in problem solving.

Students are challenged to design a recovery plan that can take the form of a habitat theme

park (like Seaworld), a plan to preserve the animal in its natural habitat, or developing a captive breeding program within an existing zoo. A popular choice is the habitat theme park, but it is not enough to simply design a fantasy theme park. Cost, available land, and other real-life constraints must be considered in the design. In computer class, for example, students are given the unit price of concrete, fencing material, and trees, and then use spreadsheets to develop a construction budget. They also need to figure out how to raise the revenue—a challenge which the students typically approach through a fundraising plan, charging admission, and concession sales. Of course, the park must also include a scientifically defensible plan for animal breeding and recovery.

In computer class, students were using a variety of software, including word processing, spreadsheets, hyper-text stacks, and computer-aided design. Many students were producing computer models of their theme parks using Swivel-3D software by which one takes a quick visual tour from different angles and perspectives. Accompanying these computer drawings were hyper-text stacks that allow quick retrieval of information by clicking on highlighted text with the computer mouse. These and other computer products become part of the student presentations.

Phase 3: Presentations to the "Board of Directors"

The project culminates with a group presentation of the recovery plan to a hypothetical zoo "board of directors." An entire day is set aside for presentations so that regional zoo experts can participate. On the day of the observation, members of the Metro Washington Park Zoo (Portland, Oregon) and the Point Defiance Zoo and Aquarium (Tacoma, Washington) were sitting on the board of directors along with a well-respected scientist named Ray Erickson. After a full career in conservation biology, Erickson retired in Salem and is now an active community participant in the Endangered Species project. Using zoo professionals and scientists adds credibility and realism to the project and, of course, shows students that careers do indeed exist in this area.

Each student group gives a 15-minute presentation to the hypothetical board made up of the zoo professionals and teachers. The students must present and defend their plan, convincing the board that the proposal deserves funding. The panel asks questions and offers a critique at the end, and a teacher who worked closely with the group completes a performance evaluation sheet. (Parents may also attend the presentations; additionally, there is a practice night to which parents are invited.)

Ten presentations were observed. In a typical presentation, students took turns talking from prepared notes on index cards and used a number of visual aids. They talked about the animal, its habitat, its current status and recovery efforts, and then gave a detailed presentation and defense of their recovery plan, which often took the form of a habitat theme park. Through these presentations, students demonstrated their skills in writing, computers, art/design, problem solving, and public speaking. Many groups developed brochures or informational pamphlets to promote their wildlife parks, some done on word processors with sophisticated computer graphics and color maps, and others done more simply by hand. Slides and video clips were often woven in to provide background about the animal and habitat. Some groups demonstrated computer hypercard stacks by which a visitor to the park could "point and click" on an exhibit terminal to find information about animals and park exhibits (as people do today in modern museums). Some students showed off their computer expertise, while others showed what they could do with hand-built models or drawings. Some of the displays were very intricate and others very simple.

Students had to persuade the panel by talking about such things as the needs of a particular species and how their plan promotes animal health and breeding. In the case of a theme park, students talked about how the park would attract customers and raise revenue, and the acquisition of land and breeding stock. The zoo experts often asked tough questions, although they also offered advice at the end of presentations. The questions from the panel tested students on their knowledge of animal behavior and on the thoroughness with which they had thought through their plan. One zoo expert saw his role as providing "a reality check for students without too much reality"—in other words, challenging students to consider the real issues, but doing so without making students feel hopeless about saving their species.

The Performance Assessment

The staff at Waldo are currently in the process of developing performance assessments around the Endangered Species project that focus on five areas: 1) applying concepts of conservation biology in the recovery plan, 2) collaborating with the group to share knowledge and develop the recovery plan, 3) word processing the research paper, 4) presenting the recovery plan, and 5) developing support materials using a computer and other media. Staff members are developing rubrics for these areas. Each student is rated individually. Thus, a teacher rater must observe the group *and* individual contributions throughout the entire project to be able to make individual student ratings at the end. Students also develop individual portfolios from their products, including their writing samples, computer products, etc. This facet of the project is still in the developmental phase, and the staff do not yet feel that they have achieved reliable and valid performance assessments.

Anecdotal Evidence: Staff, Student, and Observer Perceptions

While conducting the observations at Waldo, some staff members and students were asked to share their perceptions of the project. In general, staff members were excited about this project and felt that this integrated approach would be made easier as the school moves to block scheduling in the near future. When asked to relate some anecdotal evidence about the program's effectiveness, teachers mentioned several things: Students are generally very engaged in this class. It is a contemporary topic and a vehicle for achieving a deeper understanding of a real-life problem. Students talk about their projects a lot—even in relation to things they see and hear outside of school, such as nature shows on the Discovery Channel or things they might come across in National Geographic.

The class also teaches responsibility: Teams have to manage and work together on their projects. The use of professional scientists allows students see that real people are working on these issues and that such jobs require a foundation of knowledge and skills.

One challenge is that some students and groups will need more time than others, and this means providing some flexibility (i.e., finding extra time during or after school for some groups to complete their projects).

Many of the students interviewed were also excited by the project. They value the approach of making learning more real and, at the very least, they recognized this class as something really different and more interesting than the standard curriculum. Some students described the experience as difficult and stressful at times, but they also noted that it was worth it in the end, because it provided a sense of accomplishment and real learning. The only complaint heard was that, in some groups, one or two students in the group were doing most of the work.

Finally, one issue that struck this observer is the need for a grouping strategy between student choice and creating heterogeneous learning groups. Allowing students to self-select into groups by the animals that interest them is a good tactic for increasing student engagement and giving middle school students some reasonable control over their learning. Yet, in the seventh grade class observed, students seemed to segregate themselves into girl groups, boy groups, and to some extent by race (i.e., two of the groups were made up predominantly of minority students). Judging from the final presentations, there might have been some unintentional separation into high-ability and low-ability groups, since some presentations were really outstanding, while others reflected less effort and lower quality work. This observation is offered as a caveat since the research also makes it clear that cooperative learning and heterogeneous groups help ensure that all students learn. A real challenge is giving students the choice they need to feel ownership for their projects, while also trying to create more heterogeneous, mixed-ability groups This is a challenge which the staff at Waldo continues to work on as the project evolves.

Continuous Improvement

While everyone at Waldo feels they have a good thing going with the Endangered Species project, it is a fledgling effort at the time of this writing, and the teaching staff is continuing to fine-tune it in order to make a good

thing even better. As mentioned above, one organizational change that facilitates this thematic approach is block scheduling, which Waldo will be implementing in the near future. With the block scheduling, for example, life sciences will extend for a full semester instead of eight weeks. This will allow more time to set the stage with a firmer grounding in life sciences concepts before students embark on their intensive eight-week endangered species projects.

A second challenge is the need for continued upgrading of information resources in a topic area such as endangered species, where the scientific knowledge and social/political discourse is continuously evolving. The project will be making more use of World Wide Web sites on the Internet to keep current on new knowledge and changes in the field. The number of Web sites related to endangered species is mushrooming, and many of these sites will be added to the information base for student research.

Finally, teachers participating in the project are always looking for ways to improve their practice. One example of this is the continuing effort to fully integrate valid and reliable performance assessments into the project. Another offshoot is a community service learning component in which students who complete the endangered species work volunteer as guides in the participating zoos. They receive further training about an animal of interest at the zoo and then act as guides for visiting elementary students. Finally, teachers continue to work collaboratively to addresses the complex challenges of an integrated, thematic curriculum.

The project can be expected to continue growing as a highly engaging and meaningful learning experience for middle school students. Those desiring more information about Waldo's Endangered Species project may contact Mike Weddle, Waldo Middle School, 2805 Lansing Avenue NE, Salem, OR 97303-1599, (503) 399-3215.

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January 1996

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT RESEARCH SERIES
"Research You Can Use"

Snapshot #39

Improving Elementary School Climate

Bonneville Elementary School
Pocatello, Idaho

Kathleen Cotton

Research Findings

Staff of Bonneville Elementary School in Pocatello, Idaho based their plan for improving their school's climate on research findings presented in the first edition of *Effective Schooling Practices: A Research Synthesis* (Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory 1984).* These include

1.11 Personal Interactions Between Teachers and Students Are Positive

- Teachers make sure they let students know they really care.
- Students are allowed and encouraged to develop a sense of responsibility and self-reliance.

1.12 Incentives and Rewards for Students are Used to Promote Excellence

- All students know about the rewards and what they need to do to get them. Rewards are chosen because they appeal to students.
- Parents are told about students' successes and requested to help students keep working toward excellence.
- Awards are set at several different levels of performance, providing all students with opportunities for success and recognition.
- Incentives and rewards are appropriate to student developmental levels, are meaningful to recipients and are structured to build persistence of effort and intrinsic motivation.

Situation

Together, Pocatello and nearby Chubbuck are home to nearly 60,000 people. The 14,000 students in the Pocatello School District attend fifteen elementary schools, five junior high schools (including an alternative school), and two high schools. Bonneville Elementary School has 435 students, including a Montessori preschool for children three to five years old.

* While this document has been updated twice, in 1990 and 1995, I have preserved the wording and numbering of the 1984 document, since Bonneville staff used that version for their planning.

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School, Community and Professional Development Program

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Bonneville's student population is extremely diverse. In addition to children from the school's immediate, working-class neighborhood, the student body also includes children bused in from a trailer court at the edge of town and from the affluent Sagewood Hills neighborhood. There is a 30 percent student mobility rate at Bonneville, due in part to the fact that many students are the children of temporary residents who come to Pocatello to attend Idaho State University. Many children come from single-parent homes.

Bonneville's student population is 81 percent white, 12 percent Hispanic, 2 percent African American, and 2 percent Native American, with the remainder being Asian or Pacific Islander. Sixty-three percent of Bonneville's children are eligible for free or reduced lunch. The schools staff and students call themselves the Bonneville Bees.

Context

Inception and Implementation

Marjean Waford became Bonneville's principal in 1986. With her extensive background in staff development and strong belief in its importance, Ms. Waford worked with her staff to identify areas of need for training and set up a staff development program.

In 1988, in response to an invitation from the Pocatello district superintendent, Ms. Waford attended a meeting to introduce Pocatello administrators to NWREL's Onward to Excellence (OTE) school improvement program. Finding OTE's approach compatible with her convictions, Ms. Waford engaged her staff in the steps of the OTE program, which began with establishing a leadership team, learning about research, and developing a school profile.

When it became time to formulate a schoolwide goal as called for in the OTE process, Bonneville staff focused on the disturbing results of administering the "My Class Inventory" (MCI) to students. An instrument used to measure levels of cohesiveness, friction, (academic) difficulty, (overall) satisfaction, and competitiveness in elementary classrooms, the MCI revealed unacceptably high levels of friction and competitiveness.

These findings came as no surprise to many Bonneville staff members, who were troubled about the negative effects of competitive activities in the school's program. Many students, for example, found participation in the schoolwide Spelling Bee and Geography Bee extremely stressful—so much so that some responded by crying or throwing up. Likewise, the annual Science Fair was structured in such a way that student winners received ribbons and accolades and gave presentations on their projects, while the efforts of other participating students were virtually ignored.

Another area of competition was the school's Field Day. Structured much like the Science Fair, Field Day activities led to ribbons and glory for the most athletic youngsters, who frequently added insult to injury by lording their success over other children.

In recounting Bonneville's competitive activities, staff members spoke of the infamous lunchroom competition of former days. Under this system a teacher's aide observed the lunchroom behavior of students, rewarded well-behaved classrooms of children with a "whale" or other "good" animal symbols, and gave "pigs" or other "bad" animal symbols to classes exhibiting less desirable behavior. Classes that had amassed the most "good" animals were then permitted to go to lunch first, while others followed, with the recipients of the most pigs or other "bad" animals going to lunch last. Staff members say that the friction this system caused among students was nothing compared to the friction it produced among teachers, many of whom wanted to go first and have a longer lunch break, and subsequently became involved in petty bickering.

Staff members assert that competition at the classroom level also had a divisive effect on students, with top academic and behavioral performers consistently winning and gloating, and other students being visibly distressed over repeated experiences of failure.

Together, the MCI findings and staff perceptions led Bonneville staff to formulate the following goal:

> Student attitudes should improve regarding the levels of friction and competition by lowering toward the

mean over the next two years as measured by the School Climate Inventory Instrument.

The plan undertaken to achieve this goal included many elements—elements intended to enhance student self-esteem as well as reduce friction and competition. Key changes included the following:

- Some staff studied the work of educational consultant Alfie Kohn, a leading educational researcher and writer, on the negative effects of competition and beneficial effects of cooperation in schools. Kohn's book, *No Contest: The Case Against Competition* (Houghton-Mifflin 1986) helped to shift staff's thinking away from competitive activities.

- The schoolwide, compulsory Spelling and Geography Bees are things of the past. They have been replaced by lower-profile versions, in which participation is elective, and the events do not take place before the entire school.

- The Science Fair, now called "A Celebration of Science," no longer involves designating winners and losers. Instead, each student who develops an exhibit receives a participation ribbon and gives a presentation of his or her project to special guests from outside the school, such as county commissioners and columnists from the local newspaper.

- The school Field Day is now comprised chiefly of noncompetitive games, many selected from *The Cooperative Sports and Games Book: Challenge without Competition* (by Terry Orlick, Pantheon Books, 1978). Such competitions as there are—tug-o'-war, sack races, relays, etc.—are "just for fun," says Ms. Waford, and do not involve awarding ribbons or prizes.

- The lunchroom competition now takes an entirely different form. For one thing, students in grades four through six, who tend to eat faster, now go to lunch before the younger children, who are more likely to dawdle, become distracted, and require more time. Within each group (K-3 and 4-6), classes take turns going first, second, and so on. The teacher's aide continues to observe behavior and award the coveted whales, dreaded pigs, and animals in between; but acknowledgment of good lunchroom behavior occurs chiefly at the classroom level, where teachers might offer the incentive of a popcorn party when the class earns ten whales. The only interclass competitive element is that the class awarded the most whales earns the right to have "Willy the Whale," a stuffed animal, in their classroom for a specified period of time.

- Instead of pitting children against one another, Bonneville's academic awards system extends "Super Top-Notch Bee" status to all students meeting prespecified standards. Recipients are honored with a certificate, a picture of him/herself on a classroom bulletin board, and often other acknowledgment, such as being first in line.

- Other means of acknowledging excellence or improvement in students' achievement or behavior include displays on the "Wall of Excellence," the provision of "Positive Kid Tickets" when staff observe students behaving in positive ways, quarterly schoolwide recognition ceremonies that include acknowledgment of good citizenship and attendance, and an array of classroom-level recognition strategies.

- Teachers received Teacher Expectations and Student Achievement (TESA) training to increase their awareness of the ways teachers' behaviors toward students can inspire—or deflate—their motivation to learn and excel.

- Staff have implemented a cross-age tutoring program to help younger students learn and to reduce their apprehension around older students, as well as enhance the self-esteem of older students.

Subsequent Years

In the years since Bonneville began its efforts to improve the school's climate, staff have gone on to establish and pursue other schoolwide goals using the OTE process. However, in addition to their successful improvement work in language arts and, more recently, in

mathematics, they have maintained and expanded their efforts to improve school climate.

One such addition is the "BEST" (Building Esteem in Students Today) program, whose overall goals include improved school climate, development of student character strengths, and enhanced student self-esteem. Among the unit themes in the BEST program are courtesy, responsibility, caring and sharing, goal setting, honesty, feelings, health and prevention, and esteem.

The mutual caring theme is further reinforced through the "Kids Care" program. Ms. Waford remarks, "We have some 'tough' kids here—kids we need to work with continuously in areas related to caring. The Kids Care program is helpful in teaching and reinforcing caring behavior."

In a "Shoot for Grades" program involving the local Kiwanis Club and athletes from Idaho State University, students meeting certain academic standards have their names entered in a drawing, with winners receiving prizes such as going out for pizza or attending an ISU basketball game. ISU students also work with Bonneville students in a mentoring program that, depending on the wishes of the classroom teacher, might include homework help, tutoring, or helping children develop social skills.

The Present and Future

Since recent MCI survey results show an unacceptably low level of cohesiveness among Bonneville's students, the school's current work in building a positive school climate focuses on this area. Ms. Waford spoke of several new and planned activities aimed at increasing cohesiveness. One of these is to implement activities from *Developing Capable People* by Jane Nelsen, Lynn Lott, and H. Stephen Glenn (prima publishing, 1993), which are designed to teach children how to deal positively with conflicts and other interpersonal problems. Several Bonneville teachers attended an inservice activity presented by Stephen Glenn in the fall of 1995 and shared their learning with other staff.

Efforts are also underway to establish and make use of a school Impact Team, which can help to identify and make appropriate community resource referrals for children from drug- or alcohol-affected homes or other dysfunctional environments. The school counselor and one of Bonneville's teachers participated recently in an Impact program training and are working to engage staff interest in implementing the Impact Team concept.

Other activities focus on increasing the use of democratic processes in classrooms and helping teachers to increase their repertoire of nonpunitive methods for dealing with children. "It's difficult," muses Ms. Waford, "to move out of a punitive mode. Implementation of school activities requires modeling from teachers—increasing democratic processes. We are working hard to get teachers to see that their approach to dealing with problems *teaches* an approach to dealing with problems."

"Only so much can be accomplished through the use of rewards," she continues. "Especially with older students, we need to work harder on building the values of sharing and cooperation at both the classroom and school levels." Since, as Ms. Waford notes, "these values cannot be successfully taught by people who do not model them," the school counselor and others are developing activities to increase staff commitment to key features of Bonneville's code of ethics: listening attentively to children and each other, treating students with respect, working to enhance the physical and psychological well-being of students, and being open to student input into school and classroom operations. Additional training in classroom management will be offered, and a TESA review is also planned to keep teachers focused on communicating high expectations to their students.

Practice: In the Classroom

Grade 1: Ms. Kelly

A visit to Ms. Kelly's first grade class revealed teacher and children holding a class meeting and reviewing the agreements they had made as a class:

I will love myself and others.
I will work quietly so I can learn.
I will be nice, kind, and friendly so we can have fun.
I will obey all adults.

When mistakes are made, I will forgive or apologize.
I will do what works best.

This review included several key concepts for learning and reinforcement. Ms. Kelly emphasized that everyone makes mistakes sometimes, including herself and other adults. Much of the discussion focused on the importance of keeping agreements. At Ms. Kelly's prompting, students told personal stories of times when others broke their agreements and how this made the children feel, as well as times when they broke an agreement with someone else. She then discussed with the class what a "vision" is and engaged them in developing a vision around the concept, "How will our school be if everyone keeps their agreements?"

Based on a classwide decision made at the beginning of the school year, "Bee Buttons" were given out to those children who had kept certain prespecified agreements. "This is my way of thanking you for keeping your promises," said Ms. Kelly.

Grade 4: Mrs. Crooks

A BEST program activity was underway in Ms. Crooks' class—one that involved a discussion of symbolism as it applies to the state of Idaho and to Bonneville school. A question-and-answer session established that a symbol represents/stands for/means something else and is often used to express pride in whatever the symbol represents. Children identified the state flower, seal, bird, tree, gem, and so on, proceeding on to identifying symbols of their school—its song, colors, flag, motto, and mascot.

Next, Ms. Crooks engaged the children in folding large sheets of paper so as to make a "magic book," each page of which would be dedicated to one of the Bonneville symbols. Like published books, these books were to be laid out with a cover picture, title, author's name, and page numbers. As this activity proceeded, Ms. Crooks circulated around the room, praising children's work and offering help as needed.

Teacher Interviews

Two teachers—Virginia Kelly and Pauline Lyons—both of whom have worked at Bonneville since before the school climate improvement goal was established in 1988, shared their perceptions of the effort and its effects upon students.

According to Ms. Kelly, a former OTE leadership team member, "it takes a whole school to change a climate. When teachers compete with one another, it teaches kids to be competitive." For this reason, Ms. Kelly has removed her name from "Teacher of the Year" competition, believing that it encourages an inappropriate focus. "I don't have to do the best; I have to be *my* best, and that's the outlook I take into my classroom." She also reports having her students develop and say personal affirmations in the form of a "self-pledge" that focuses on doing one's best.

Ms. Kelly teaches her students that "the 'winner' [in an academic activity or game] is the person who learns something new." She emphasizes that learning is not to be regarded as a race or other kind of contest. "I don't ask my students if they're finished with an activity; I ask them if they're working hard and learning something they didn't know before. On their papers, I correct wrong answers without marking them 'wrong'."

Asked what changes she's observed as a result of Bonneville efforts to improve school climate, Ms. Kelly asserts that the amount of physical conflict among students has decreased. Like others on the staff, she has observed a marked decline in student stress since the previously high-profile competitive activities have either become low key or been eliminated. The school's cross-age tutoring program has, in her view, improved relations between older and younger students. Finally, she notes that whereas posters, student products, and other items on display often disappeared from the walls or were destroyed in times past, such things now occur much less frequently.

As she was leaving to rejoin her class, Ms. Kelly shared a final thought: "The more we as teachers grow in our self-esteem and appropriate use of power, the more we can enhance learning and social experiences for our children and the school as a whole."

For her part, Ms. Lyons noted a dramatic reduction in the level of conflict on the playground as a result of Bonneville's efforts to improve its climate. She credits work done at the classroom level to build students' self-esteem for much of this change. "You don't need to fight and compete with one another to feel good about yourself. You need to be the best you can be."

As an example of the harmful effects of competition, Ms. Lyons said that the intense Science Fair competition of former years actually *reduced* student participation. "It was so stressful for them," she said, "and the parents sometimes did the projects themselves so that their children would win. The kids seem to enjoy it a lot more the way it is now."

Remembering the effect the original MCI findings had on the staff, Ms. Lyons said, "It basically made us more *aware*. I don't think we realized how much the competition was affecting the children and their parents. I just hope that we are helping them build strong enough self-esteem to deal with the competition that they will face when they go on to junior high school."

"My Class Inventory" Data

Because of changes in the instruments used to measure classroom climate, it is not possible to make strict year-by-year comparisons of findings. In general, however, the data show positive effects on children in first through third grade, particularly on measures of cohesiveness, satisfaction, and difficulty of academic work. Outcomes for fourth through sixth graders, however, are mixed. While overall satisfaction ratings remain high for these students and some increases in cohesiveness were noted, friction and competition scores, in particular, remain unacceptably high.

Ms. Waford speculates that, because these older students are often involved in sports and other competitive activities outside of school, they introduce a competitive mood into the school environment. In addition, she notes that the nature of the student population has changed in the years since the climate improvement program began, with a considerable increase in children from low-income and single-parent homes and an increase in student mobility.

Neither Ms. Waford nor her staff, however, see these factors as reasons to relax their efforts to improve Bonneville's climate. Indeed, additional elements are being introduced to raise student self-regard and enhance cohesiveness—elements supported by research on building cooperative school cultures. In the meantime, both student data and staff perceptions indicate real progress in several areas and, as Ms. Waford observes, "it's so nice not to have to worry about *winning* all the time."

More information about Bonneville's program is available from Marjean Waford, Principal, Bonneville Elementary School, 320 North Eighth Avenue, Pocatello, Idaho 83201, (208) 232-2872.

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SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT RESEARCH SERIES
"Research You Can Use"

Snapshot #40

Leading an Inner-City School to "Overall Excellence"

Thurgood Marshall Elementary School[1] Seattle, Washington

Kathleen Cotton

Introduction

Receiving national recognition for overall excellence would be a great honor for any school. Receiving such recognition from two different prestigious sources is even more impressive. And it is especially striking that Seattle's Thurgood Marshall Elementary School—only five years old and having a largely low-SES, minority population—should be the recipient of these coveted national honors.

The driving force behind Marshall's attainments is the inspired, energetic leadership provided by its principal, Edward O. Jefferson, and key members of his staff. Not surprisingly, their leadership activities are highly congruent with the research findings on effective leadership. Drawn from NWREL's *Effective Schooling Practices: A Research Synthesis—1995 Update* (Cotton 1995), these findings include

2.3.1 Leaders Undertake School Restructuring Efforts as Needed to Attain Agreed-Upon Goals for Students.

Administrators and other leaders

c. Identify kinds of staff development needed to enable school leaders and other personnel to bring about desired changes.
d. Study restructuring efforts conducted elsewhere for ideas and approaches to use or adapt.

2.3.2 Strong Leadership Guides the Instructional Program.

Administrators and other instructional leaders:

a. Believe that all students can learn and that the school makes the difference between success and failure.
c. Have a clear understanding of the school's mission and are able to state it in direct, concrete terms. They establish an instructional focus that unifies staff.
g. Seek out innovative curricular programs, observe these, acquaint staff with them, and participate with staff in discussion about adopting or adapting them.

[1] Early in 1996 the school's name was changed from Colman Elementary School to Thurgood Marshall Elementary School. This change resulted from a request by the staff and community that this predominantly minority school be renamed in honor of the late Supreme Court justice.

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i. Check student progress frequently, relying on explicit performance data. They make results public, and work with staff to set standards, use them as points of comparison, and address discrepancies.

2.3.3 Administrators and Other Leaders Continually Strive to Improve Instructional Effectiveness.

Administrators and other leaders:

a. Expect that educational programs will be changed so that they work better; they are never complacent about student achievement.

d. Review programs and practices shown to be effective in other school settings for their potential in helping to meet school needs.

g. Secure and encumber resources to support improvement activities, acquire resources from many sources including the community, and make resource allocations based on instructional priorities.

2.5.1 Administrators and Teachers Provide Programs and Support to Help High-Needs Students Achieve School Success.

2.5.2 Administrators and Teachers Work to Achieve Equity in Learning Opportunities and Outcomes.

2.7.3 School Leaders and Staff Collaborate with Community Agencies to Support Families with Urgent Health and/or Social Service Needs.

2.8.1 Administrators and Teachers Involve Parents and Community Members in Supporting the Instructional Program and (2.8.2) in School Governance.

Situation

Part of the 48,000-student Seattle Public Schools, Thurgood Marshall Elementary School is located in the inner city and serves approximately 300 students in grades K-6. A very diverse school, Marshall's population is over 75 percent "minority," and 58 percent African American. Twenty percent of Marshall's students are limited-English proficient, and about 17 percent qualify for special education services. There is a 52 percent annual mobility rate. Half of Marshall's students qualify for free or reduced lunch, and 62 percent live in arrangements other than two-parent families. By design, Marshall imposes no suspensions or expulsions.

Context

A New Neighborhood School

In response to community preference, Seattle Public Schools, like many other districts, is moving away from an era of intensive busing of students to achieve racial integration, and toward a return to neighborhood schools. So it was that Thurgood Marshall Elementary School was created[2] in 1990 to serve students in its inner-city neighborhood, who for many years had been bused to schools in Seattle's north end.

Newly hired as the school's principal, Ed Jefferson, an African American and onetime student at the old Colman Elementary school, brought considerable personal insight into the needs of the community. In addition, he familiarized himself with the research on schools that successfully serve inner-city school populations, with their particular configuration of needs. He instituted a hiring procedure aimed at securing the kind of staff described in the research: he wanted teachers with at least five years of teaching experience and an interest in working with students like those who would be attending Marshall. His six-page, in-depth list of interview questions were posed to candidates by a committee reflecting the Marshall community—Jefferson himself, a teacher's union representative, two community members, and a representative from the private sector.

The Comer Restructuring Model

In addition to influencing his staffing procedure, Mr. Jefferson's study of the research on

[2] Actually, the school was *recreated*: A previous Colman Elementary School—in the same neighborhood but on a different site—had been closed down some ten years before.

effective schooling also made him aware of the Comer Restructuring Model developed by Dr. James P. Comer and his staff at the Yale University Child Study Center. He was immediately drawn to this approach because of its emphasis on involving parents—especially parents of color—and its aim of creating a caring community in which children can learn successfully. In 1991, Mr. Jefferson was introduced to Dr. Comer himself, and shortly thereafter began working with local Comer facilitator Eileen Maret to implement the model at Marshall.

A systems approach to school management, the Comer model involves all those associated with the school in establishing and maintaining a community in support of all of the school's children. The combined strengths of the school's adults—staff, parents, and agency representatives—are utilized through collaborative decision making to develop policies, procedures, and programs that improve both the academic performance and social climate of the school.

A key feature of the Comer program at Marshall is the School Planning and Management Team (SPMT), which guides program operations via the basic Comer principles of *no fault / blame, consensus decision making,* and *collaboration*. The SPMT includes the principal, counselor, nurse, speech therapist, a paraprofessional representative, and the chairpersons of the five SPMT subcommittees, as well as three parents—a PTA representative, a non-PTA parent, and a member of the business community. SPMT meetings are held in the evening to accommodate members' schedules.

The SPMT led the effort to develop mission and vision statements, a strategic plan that includes both social and academic goals, an adult development plan, and a comprehensive assessment and evaluation plan for all program components. All staff and many parents join at least one of the subcommittees of the SPMT, which focus on topics such as curriculum and instruction, professional development, school climate, safety, training parent helpers, student and staff recognition, and public relations. Each subcommittee is responsible for implementing and monitoring portions of Marshall's strategic plan. Core SPMT members conduct teacher interviews three times each year, during which the strengths, accomplishments, and needs of every Marshall student are discussed and individual plans are established as needed.

As called for in the Comer model, Marshall makes use of a Mental Health Team that focuses on prevention of and interventions into mental health issues. A half-time school counselor and the services of a school psychologist one day a week are key components of this team. The team monitors schoolwide discipline and safety practices, and is responsible for adherence to research-supported practices in the areas of mental health and child development.

The Parent Leadership Team addresses the needs of parents, encourages parent involvement, coordinates agency involvement, and provides adult education. A Parent Room houses a food and clothing bank to help meet families' basic needs, as well as serving adults in need of a high school diploma, parenting skills, life skills, or general computer-based skills. Though not required by the Comer model, a key feature of Marshall's parent involvement is the written warranty Mr. Jefferson gives to the family of each student, promising that, if parents provide love and educational support, their youngsters will perform at or above grade-level standards. The warranty also specifies what actions will be taken at each grade level to support any student who needs extra help to move up to grade level.

Staff development that is congruent with principles of child development and supports school and district goals is an inherent feature of the Comer model. Marshall staff and their many community partners learn collaboratively to increase their ability to serve students well.

The Marshall PTA is involved in all major school decisions, and Mr. Jefferson and his staff conduct vigorous outreach activities to engage parent participation and support. An annual, half-day parent workshop familiarizes parents with the many ways in which they can support their children's school performance.

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Practices

The product of a collaborative effort, Marshall's mission statement is,

> We, the Marshall staff, in partnership with families and the community, teach, nurture, and learn from children and each other. We believe that all children can learn. Working together, we can make a difference in the lives we touch.

Expressions of the belief that all children can learn and learn well are everywhere observable across Marshall's program. The *Marshall Curriculum Guide* specifies activities and resources designed to achieve district and school goals for students, including individual empowerment and responsibility for learning, individual self-worth, the ability to work cooperatively, understanding and skill in language arts and mathematics, word processing and desktop publishing skills, problem-solving and other higher-order thinking skills. With the Comer model providing the overall structure, Marshall's staff and community carry out a variety of other programs and activities to assure that these goals are met. These are detailed in the following paragraphs.

Basic Needs

Recognizing that basic needs must be met before teaching and learning can proceed successfully, Mr. Jefferson meets weekly with teachers and guidance counselors to discuss the needs of Marshall's students and determine appropriate educational, health, and/or social services. Family support and community service workers, who are funded by United Way, the City of Seattle, and the Washington Health Department, both provide services and make referrals to outside agencies as appropriate.

School Climate

Given the powerful influence of school social climate on academic performance, Marshall has established Caring Teams—long-term, family-like groups of eight or so participants that involve every Marshall adult and student. Trust and mutual support are established in these groups over time. Counseling services, peer mediation, positive discipline, and violence prevention activities also contribute to a safe and supportive school climate. A recently implemented policy of mandatory school uniforms fosters ésprit de corps, as well as drawing attention away from socio-economic differences among students.

Community Relationships

In addition to the many activities provided by and to Marshall parents, the school also has a number of business partners and partnerships with other educational agencies, as well as an Intergenerational Project which involves community people 50 years of age and older in interacting with Marshall students. Marshall has on-going collaborative relationships with Antioch University-Seattle, Seattle Mental Health Institute, Atlantic Street Center, Union Gospel Mission Youth Activity Center, Easy Madison YMCA, and the Legionnaire's Club.

Equity Provisions

Marshall is involved in Washington State MESA (Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement), a statewide program established to address the needs of groups who are underrepresented in these fields. It is a partnership involving higher education, school districts, business and industry, government, and community organizations to provide African American, Hispanic American, American Indian, and female students with services to increase their interest, participation, and contribution to math, science, and engineering.

In addition, Marshall's Bilingual Orientation Center serves students who are new to the country. Many participants in this center are children from relocation centers, who have never attended school because of military conflict and disruption in their home countries. Staff work with these students to prepare them with the communication and social skills to succeed in school.

Monitoring Student Progress

The Marshall Composite, the school's profile of academic achievement, is compiled each school year and shows individual student achievement in reading, math, and language arts. Standardized and locally developed assess-

ment instruments are used to track student academic growth, and planning time is set aside for staff to collaboratively analyze the data and make appropriate instructional changes.

Three times each year, core members of the Support Team screen all students in the school via teacher interviews. Academic, behavioral, health, and social services needs are identified, with school-level plans and community agency referrals arranged.

Other Programs

Marshall is an Early Childhood Model site, which requires matching the instruction to each student's best learning rate and style. Gifted, special education, and Chapter 1 programs are provided to qualifying students, and Marshall is a magnet school in the area of science and computers. In addition, instruction in music, physical education, student council, environmental education, after-school tutoring, and other services are provided.

Marshall's Children and Parents

Bilingual Orientation Center

A visit to the Bilingual Orientation Center revealed lessons in progress for students from Ethiopia, Laos, Bosnia, and several South American countries. Sitting on a rug in a corner of the classroom, students followed along in their books as the teacher read simple sentences. The alphabet and the numbers from 1 to 10 were prominently displayed on the work tables, each of which seats four students.

Originally established to serve each student for one semester, in reality the Bilingual Orientation center often supports children throughout their first year at Marshall—which is often their first year in *any* school. It is Marshall's practice to integrate ESL children into all school activities to build language and socialization skills and to avoid an "us-and-them" mentality.

Grades 2-3

In a class serving regular and gifted program students in second and third grade, the children were engaged in composing short poems based on a rhyme scheme the teacher had given them:

> Spike[3] in the cage,
> Spike in the cage,
> Take him out, take him out,
> Spike in the cage.

The exercise involved children working with a partner to compose a verse about something in their classroom and share it with the rest of the class. The teacher carefully explained the instructions and, after several pairs of students had presented their verses, she began asking the class open-ended questions, for example, "What do you see about the patterns in these poems?"

One student pair shared a verse based on the phrases "Heart in your body" and "Love and share." The teacher used this as an opportunity to reinforce Marshall's themes of sharing and mutual respect.

Grade 3

In a third grade class, the teacher, Mr. Chow, remarked that he had 26 children in his class at this early point in the school year and hoped the class would not become larger. After discussing a story titled, "Mixed Up Mystery Smell," the students put away their materials in preparation for lunch. Mr. Chow reiterated instructions for proceeding down the hall in an orderly manner

Parent Appraisals

Parents' support of Marshall's programs and staff was evident in a late afternoon discussion with a parents' group. Highlights from this informal gathering included the following parent comments:

- From a Hispanic female parent: "You should have seen the school my son was in before we came to Marshall[4]. Before deciding on Marshall, I did quite a bit of research and checked everybody out. It was hard getting my son enrolled, but Mr. Jefferson helped every step of the way.

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[3] "Spike" is the class's pet guinea pig.
[4] I have taken the liberty of substituting "Marshall" for "Colman" in these quotations.

I'm impressed about the dedication to all children that you see here."

- From a white male parent: "The staff here has a passion for what they do. Marshall is a safe, comfortable environment where parents are always welcome. Mr. Jefferson and the other people here... they're committed to the parent-school relationship."

- From an African-American female parent: "My son had a reading problem, and so the staff gathered around and mobilized to support him. The teachers have an open-door policy here....Last year's parenting workshop was excellent."

Each of these speakers gave high praise to Mr. Jefferson in particular, citing his tireless dedication and the support they and their children had received with academic and other issues.

Seventy-eight parents returned a school climate survey sent out by Marshall staff in 1995. Comprised of 20 positive statements (e.g., "I feel that the staff cares about my child/children," "My child's school is a safe and orderly place"), the survey asked parents to respond to each statement on a four-point scale indicating whether they strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree. Mean responses fell between agree and strongly agree for all but one of the statements, and that one had to do with the extent of the responding parent's involvement in school decision making.

National Recognition

These accolades are underscored in the April 1995 *Redbook* magazine feature, "America's Best Elementary Schools." Marshall is one of 60 schools cited for "overall excellence" in 1995, and Edward Jefferson is one of eight principles profiled. "[H]e always keeps his office door open," says the article, "for students who need a pep talk."

In addition, Marshall is one of six schools chosen as Demonstration Schools by the National Alliance of Black School Educators (NABSE) in 1995. Launched to identify high-performing schools with large percentages of African-American and low-SES students, the NABSE Demonstration Schools project called for nominations early in 1995. During a review process conducted by an on-site NABSE review team in the fall, Marshall met or exceeded all nine project standards.[5] Marshall representatives were honored at NABSE's national conference in Dallas, Texas in November 1995, and will receive support and technical assistance from NABSE in agreed-upon areas.

For more information about Thurgood Marshall Elementary School, contact Edward O. Jefferson, 2401 South Irving Street, Seattle, Washington 98144, (206) 281-6603.

[5] Project standards are in the areas of effective leadership, collaboratively developed mission statement, high expectations for students and staff, cultural excellence, relevant and effective criteria, student progress monitoring and reporting, safe and positive school climate, active parent and community participation, and civic responsibility and participation.

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